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Mahatma Gandhi was fasting in Calcutta to bring peace among the Hindus and Muslims on the very day India's national flag was being hoisted for the first time at the Red Fort. In over three, decades since then, how much has the situation improved? The last few years have witnessed an ugly resurgence of the communal virus, which today could infect the entire country. In ten years, between 1969 to 1978, more than 1,600 persons were killed and over 16,000 were injured in communal clashes. And, in two months since the election commission ordered elections in Assam at least 1,400 have lost their lives in fratricidal battles. Girish Mathur, Rajendra Sareen, Nikhil Chakravartty, Khushwant Singh with Sunday correspondents trace the roots of communalism, examine various aspects of this enormous problem and suggest steps to contain what can be aptly termed the national scourge.

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Cover transparency by Aloke Mitra

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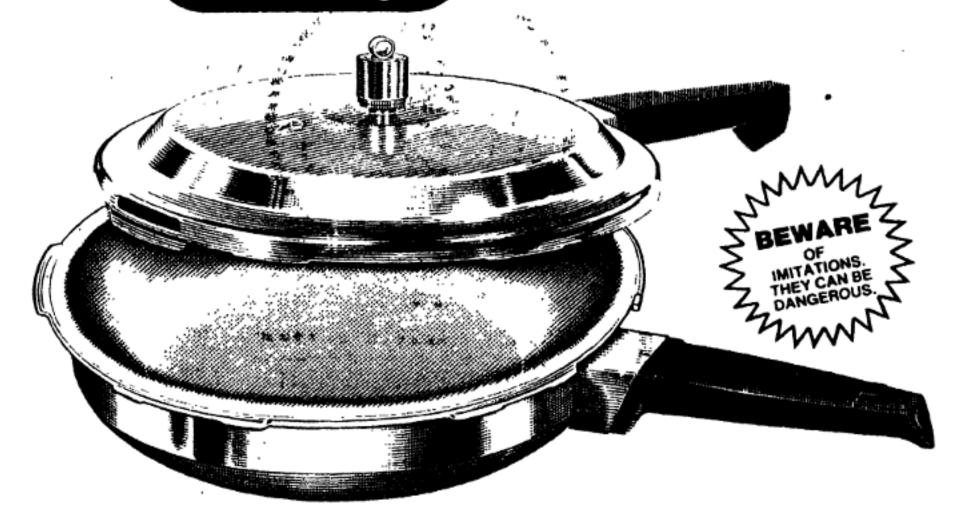
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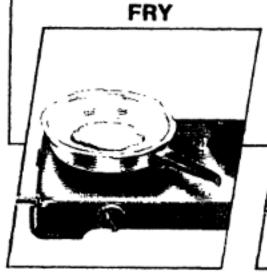
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Feroze Varuna Gandhi

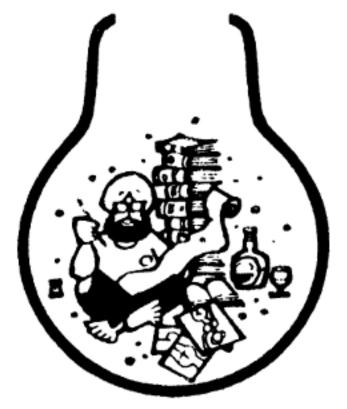
of was going to be a scoop, the first ever interview given by the youngest member of "the royal Gandhi-Nehru family" to 🛮 a journalist. It did not turn out that way. To all my questions he responded with broad smiles which could not be registered on a taperecorder. 'How like a Nehru-Gandhi he is.' I said to myself, 'he his learnt early in life not to give away state secrets to press people.' Besides, the atmosphere was not very conducive for an interview. There were about 50 children in their Sunday-best, carrying balloons and blowing through paper-pipes between munching chocolate cake and ice-cream. There were jugglers, bandarwallahs and even a camel. It was the 13th of March, the brithday of the late Saujay Gandhi's only child

He has had more than his share of drama in his life. He lost his father a couple of months after his first birthday. The break between his father's and mother's tamilies deprived him of the security of a home. the company of cousins, uncles, aunts and above all his paternal grandmother. To this day he is known as Varuna in one home. Feroze in the other. Since in either place everyone was busy doing their own thing, no one had much time for him. Before he was two he was sent off to the kindergarten known as The Study For some months he continued visiting the paternal home and could tell you where his daadima was "Andhra Karnataka gace ham. Assam gaec ham "And the latest "Non aligned gace hain"—as if NAM was another state in India. But he has no place of his own and shattles between his mother's rented residence which is next door to his school, and spends his afternoons with his naanima in Jor Bagh Visits to Number One Satdarjang Road have become less and less frequent. After an absence of four months he was summoned there on his third birthday. He occasionally visits me-not out of any attachment to me but to play with kittens that infest my apart-

He is a precocious child with a mind well ahead of his years. At three he can read Hindi and English, knows that breaking leaves or flowers causes pain to plants bearing them. On this last birthday he planted trees in the compound of an animal hospital being put up by his animal-foving mother. Maneka.

He is, as they say, the spitting image of his father—the same cher-

a for the second second



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

ries-and cream complexion, the same dark, naturally mascaraed eyes, the same Mickey-Mouse ears and the same shy smile and the same mono-syllabic speech punctuated by grunts, hunh, hanh. And oddly enough he has the same in terests he spends his Sunday mornings at the flying club and can identify different kinds of ancraft.

I had to thead my way through the mob of screaming and shouting children to get to him perched on a swing with two of his friends. He was dressed in black velvet. His face smudged with chocolate. I gave him the gift I brought him, he had received far too many and was not impressed. I was not sure

Feroze Varuna image of his tather



whether he had recognised me and asked "Pehchaanter ho" file gave me a bewitching smile and replied "Han! Billiwala"

Just God?

A tour year-old boy, the only child of his parents was on his way back from school. As usual with children on their return journey, he was impatient to get back home Without bothering to look on either side, he ran across the road and was knocked down by a speeding track and killed instantaneously. The trock driver sped away and was never traced. An innocent life was lost, the man who took his life escaped punishment Is there a God? An all-powerful and just God? The Holy Book promises "No ills betall the righteous, but the wicked are tilled with trouble—(Proverbs). The Holy Book asks "Consider, what innocent ever perished, or where have the righteous been des troved?" (lob) Let those who behere in God and in His attinite mercy explain why a child where parents had committed no sin had pain inflicted on them and then the man who caused them interact went scot tree. I will not buy the theory that we pay for sms commit ted in a previous life or will be compensated in the life bereatter There is no evidence whatsoe or el-Samskara, it is no more than what Chalib described

Dil bahlamey to khayaal ach' i hai di is a good id, a to beloof the mind:

I go along with Joh in being to that God of there is one or above notions of fairness and more rate if that apply to us mortals. He is in fact of the iscene who is the model of began with the une irin according that we will be a short and the within yourself and you will find all other answers to your goostiers.

The book of Job ends with Jobs wife praying

The candles in chinches are can. The stars have gone out in the ske Blow on the coal of the heart. And we'll see by and by

Strange contridence also they actly the same is expressed to an Urdir couplet in almost the large words.

Buth raties from chairing decree horam

Dil jako ke resbe, k o ba

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Mistrust between Indian and Pak officials must end

ow that the "visa and shopping" incident is many days old and has lost the heat it had generated when it happened. I am reverting to it. The reference is to Abdul Qadır Harsan's remarks in his light column. "Non political talks," in Pakistan's Nawa-i-Waut, an Urda daily, and the letter Mr. Manı Shankar Aiyar, joint secretary in charge of external publicity, wrote in reply. Both the remarks and the reply were amateurish. But what surprises me is that Mr Aiyar, otherwise an extremely pleasant man, should have lost his cool and should have reacted officially to something written in a light vein. Surely, it is not the policy of the government of India to reply to what is said jocularly?

In his column entitled, "Before going to Dellu," Hassan wrote many things which showed he was all for better relations between India and Pakistan. For example, he said: "We have to live with Delhi and Dellu with us. This is a historical compulsion and we cannot escape it. We cannot close our eyes to Delhi, nor can Delhi ignore us. Our relations are very old, just as our friendship and enmities We share many things and differ on many. And we are forced to live together." In the same column, he said that he would have liked to go to Bombay, the heart of India's film world, but could not do so because he had been "confined to Delhi" since his visa was for Delhi alone. "The world's biggest democracy is afraid of me," he wrote. That apparently upset Mr Aiyar. So also Hassan's remark: "I have no plan to do any shopping in Delai since I have done a lot of buying from Hindu shopkeepers in my early childhood."

even react to such remarks. But he did. And what was worse, Mr Aiyar.

A Comment of the Comm

apparently with the foreign minister's approval, shot off a reply which is as follows:

"We understand that in your column on 7 March you had claimed that the greatest democracy of the world seems to be afraid of you. You know of course that the same restrictions apply in India for Pakistani citizens as are imposed on Indian citizens in Pakistan by your government. If you have been given a visa for Delhi alone, doubtless it is because you applied only to visit Delhi. If, however, you have any special problem in this regard, please feel free to approach me.

"As regards your proposed shopping expedition, I understand that you have written that you had enough of purchasing done from Hindu shookeepers during my childhood." It seems to me that this is a thought unworthy of any decent human being, unworthy of an honoured newspaper, unworthy of a great country and totally contrary to the atmosphere of cordiality and extraordinary friendliness which the leaders of India and Pakistan are attempting to generate."

External affairs officials were also upset by the reproduction in the Pakistan Times of a Delhi newspaper report that pressmen were cordoned off and could not meet the delegates during the recent Non-Aligned Summit in Delhi. The paper's correspondent visiting Delhi wrote: "The newsmen are forced to accept the version of a few officials, who describe themselves as spokesmen, telling them what was transpiring behind closed doors."

The reply did not deal with the charge that there was no easy access to delegates. It only said that the arrangements were good at the media centre. And President Zia of Pakistan was taken round and he endorsed the claim about the

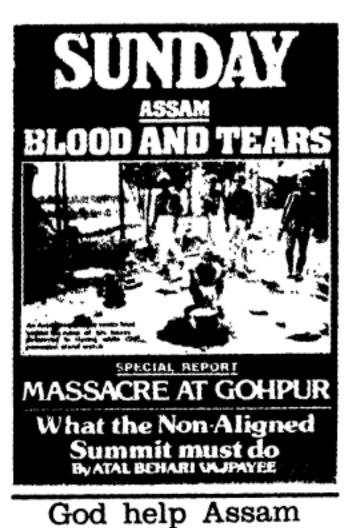
arrangements. There is no doubt that officials react to criticism. But why should they be so very hypersensitive? Why can they not be less ponderous? The work that the ministry did to make the non-aligned summit a success was undoubtedly excellent. But the inability of several officials to laugh at themselves has shown a surprising lack of self-confidence.

Of course, Hassan knows, as does almost everyone else, that without Mr Aiyar trying to prove that "the world's biggest democracy" is not afraid of a Pakistani journalist, reciprocity usually governs visa rules between any two countries. But I feel that in this case, as in others, we should not come down to the level of the Pakistan government. India is an open society and its main asset is its openness. On the other hand, Pakistan is a closed, military run state. True, Pakistan issues visas entitling visits to specified cities (the maximum number is three) and not the whole country. India also does the same thing.

Before the Pakistani journalists came to cover the non-aligned conference. I suggested to our foreign minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, that visas entitling journalists to visit the entire country should be issued—we are not a perfect society, but a democracy does not have to hide anything and we should let the visitors make their own judgments.

The spy phobia which torments countries in the sub-continent does not allow them to give a person from a neighbouring country a regular' visa, though this is issued to everyone coming from Europe or America.

When I was in Pakistan recently, I was followed everywhere. I once went up to the car following me around in Lahore and chided the men in it. They said that they were only doing their duty. I sent a complaint to General Zia, but there was not even an acknowledgement from his office. One Pakistani journalist told me that when he was in India last, the police went to the village he visited to find out whom he had met. I do not think that the ioint commission or a no-war pact between India and Pakistan will make any difference until the officials in both countries start behaving normally. In these two countries, there is so much suspicion (and even hatred) in the official class against each other that there is seldom any response to suggestions to lift restrictions. Sometimes I feel that the officials on both sides have developed a vested interest in bad relations between India and Pakistan. Probably, they would not know what to do if India and Pakistan were to be really good neighbours in word and deed.



The cover story, Assam: Blood and Lears (6 March), and the photographs of the Gohpur massacre left me totally shocked. I cannot help praising Saumitra Bancrjee and Scema Guha for the effort

Muyyam Rajan, Ranchi

The carnage in Assam could have been averted if Mrs Gandhi had shown some respect for democracy and democratic norms. When Mrs Gandhi returned to power, the average Indian had hoped that a lasting solution to the Assamese problem was on the cards; but now it is abundantly clear that the Assamese themselves will have to help themselves—not by butchering each other, but through a peaceful process.

K. S. Ganapathy Subramanyam, Madras

Every citizen of this country ought to be ashamed of the brutal massacres in Assam. The agitators and the central government have taken Assam as a prestige issue. The main responsibility lies undoubtedly with the centre. Elections had to be announced, and once announced they could not be postponed because that would have been an affront to the government. Assam has exposed the hollowness of our leaders who completely failed to see the writing on the wall.

Innocent men, women and children have been slaughtered, almost like animals, in Assam. Once again the minorities have suffered; once again, communalism has raised its ugly head. What is the solution? An organised walkout in Parliament?

M.S. Salim. Aligarh

gratulations to the Congress(1) for polood-stained victory in Assam. Dan Chaurasia, Mesra (Bihar)

Fre the elections legal and constitual? Even Mr Sakhder had said that

it would be wrong to hold elections in Assam on the basis of the '77 rolls. We decided to boycott the elections because the rolls had not been revised; because voting rights were given to the 33 lakh foreigners who entered Assam between 1979 and '82; and because those Assamese youth (almost 300,000 in number) who had attained the voting age between 1979 and '83 were not included in the electoral rolls. Poresh Kharghoria, Jorhat

I wish to thank Sunday for throwing light on the brutal massacres. The tribals in Assam have committed a sin which will surely go down in history Kurban Ukani, Calcutta

The report was exhaustive and factual. But what is the point in merely reflecting on incidents? The question is: Who is killing who and why? And what has provoked the easy-going Assamese to

The demands of the Assamese are very simple: stop illegal immigration to their state, and disperse the over-oncmillion illegal immigrants in different parts of the country. Even after 22 rounds of talks, lasting 114 days, the centre has tailed to appreciate our demands. And eventually, it has preferred to misuse the provisions under Article 324 to hold elections in Assam. The centre claimed that it did not receive the cooperation of the opposition to amend the Constitution so that President's rule could continue in Assam. My point is: How long could President's rule continue in Assam's

The agitationists do not recognise the validity of the elections. The centre is silent. Who, then, can save Assam? The answer is simple: The Assamese themselves.

Gautam Kumar Vakil, Bombay

Congratulations to Saumitra Banerjee and Seema Guha for the cover story. As for Aloke Mitra's photographs of the Gohpur carnage, they spoke volumes of the high standards of SUNDAY.

Vivek Sen, Kalyan Nagai (West Bengal)

All we need is a Nero to complete the great drama.

Khaitul Anam, Dhaligaon (Assam)

While congratulating Sunday for the coverage, I must admit that I was sickened by those photographs. I can only pray for Assam and for its people who alone can determine the future of that state. Murderers cannot be allowed to guide our destinies. Joydeb Ghatak, Chittaranjan

Unless the culprits are punished, the . . atma of those innocent children murdered in Assam will not find peace, 🛴 Pattukottai P. Dhanapal, Madras : 249-25

Seema Guha and Saumitra Baneries was excellent. But some of their predict tions went wrong. Their assumption that the Muslims would vote was incorrect as was their couclusion that the

tribals had never supported the present movement in Assam. The truth is that most of the tribals are supporting the agitation.

Banjul Barthakur, Marioni (Assam)

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is solely responsible for the present turmoil in Assam. For the last five years the BJP has been trying to oust the Muslims from Assam. The party should be banned immediately.

C. Bhattacharjee, Gauhati

This has reference to Hiren Gohain's article, Blind hostility is no solution. 1 do not agree with him when he says that the Assamese themselves are responsible for the current riots in Assam. It was the central government's inept handling of the issue that resulted in the senseless carnage Jaspal Singh, Calcutta

The photographs of the Gohpur massacre were so horrifying that I shuddered to look at them again. A brilliant piece of work by the Sunday photographer.

M. Sarkar, Bhubaneswar

It is a pity indeed that my article (Blind hostility is no solution) appeared in print more than a month after it reached Sunday. Many of my observations, which now appear like truisms, would surely have made a different impression had the article come out before the elections. After all, whatever its faults, the article mentioned:

1 The tribal resentment against immigration (not that they are very fond

of the Assamese).

2. Depth of rural Assamese support to the movement, partly owing to landpauperism.

3. The need for a non-partisan approach on the part of major political parties to the Assam question.

I hope this will at least lead to a more cautious attitude among parties on the left.

The delay in publication has had a more serious, if unintended, repercussion. As my article followed hard on the heels of the terrible photographs of the Nellie massacres, its advocacy of the Assamese cause might have appeared heartless, if not cruel. Actually, it was written and sent long before the massacres at Nellie and elsewhere, in a mood of bitter anger provoked by incessant barracking by zealots of the left and the right.

The riots were far from spontaneous. Reporters from the national media have stated that there is no discoverable pattern in the riots, which seemed to pit all communities against one another. If I may say so, that exactly is the pattern behind them. And to carry out such a design, the force behind those riots must be enormously power w The coverage of the Assam elections by ... Lel, well-organised and extensively Mased. Until an impartial inquity proves otherwise, I shall retain some doubt that the government had something to do with them.

Hiren Gohain, Gauhati

Qubramaniam Swamy's projection of Othe Russian T-72 tanks as under boxes (The T-72 tanks are tinder boxes, 13 February) was highly distorted. It would have been better if Dr Swamy had commented on the performance of these tanks in relation to other medium-capacity tanks in the world 1 also think that the Israeli evaluation of our defence system as reported by Dr

Swamy, is not correct.

To the best of my knowledge—which is based on my readings of the Soviet Military Review and discussions with senior Indian military officials--the T-72 is among the best in the world. The tank has a 125 mm smoothbore cannon as its main weapon, a 7.62 mm coaxial machine gun and a 12.7 mm air defence gun Besides having most of the other tacilities essential in any kind of combat tlike a 360-degree revolving turret and night-fighting aides), the T-72 tank is equipped with an automatic loading system. These specifications make it preferable to the American M48 Patton tank or the Leopard-2 tank manufactured by West Germany. Here are some more details of the T-72 tank

The tank has a sandwich-type armour which is as good as the best the western bloc has been able to produce so tar About Dr Swamy's observation that these tanks can be ignited casily, it must be remembered that no tank today has an armour which cannot be penetrated by anti-tank guided missiles and ammunitions like the hardcore shells. As for the protection of its crew, the T 72 tank has a hermeticallyscaled hull which protects the crew

against radioactivity. Talking of armour protection, it must be borne in mind that if a tank is heavy (like the Israeli MGT), its mobility would have to be sacrificed. The T-72 tank has a ground clearance of 470 mm against 430 mm of the T-62 tank Moreover the T-72 tank has a special deep-wading equipment to negotiate water barriers up to five metres in depth. The tank also has a very low silhouette. This is based on the Russian view that protection can be improved if the height of the tank is decreased

There are two reservations about this tank. The first is that it usually overheats in desert conditions. But this apprehension is not correct as the tests conducted in the Thar desert did not indicate this. The tank has a watercooling system as against the aircooling system found in most tanks. This should prove to be a boon in Indian conditions. The second reservation relates to the crew comfort. It is true that fall people find the T-72 tank uncomfortable. But this has been sacrificed in the interest of crew protection. Finally, we must remember that performance of a particular equipment during war depends a lot on who uses it and under what circumstances. The same Patton tank which was not so offective when Pakistan used it against India, proved to be deadly when Israel used it against the Arabs.

Dr Swamy claimed that, according to

the Israelis, the T-72 is a tinder box

Kanwar Sandhu, Chandigarh

with Flight International, a senior Israeli Air Force officer hinted that a new type-top-attack, anti-tank weapon had been used against the Russian, built T-72 tanks. This interview which was censored by the Israeli defence ministry clearly indicates that the Israelis realised that "from above, the armour is much thinner than infront..." and used the SADARM (senseand-destroy armour, in which a canis; ter or shell is detonated above a formation of tanks and small bomblets are released which are guided by sensors to the turret of a tank). SADARM has been successfully tested by the USA and it poses a definite threat to the tank.

which ignites easily. In an interview

Similarly, the SA-6 anti-aircraft missile affords no protection because the Pakistani F16 armed with Shirke mits siles can easily knock out the air defence radar to destroy the SA-6 on the ground itself. Furthermore, Dr Swamy? has highlighted the belief that both the MiG-21 and 23 are poor in providing safety to their pilots. When a fighter is hit, the pilot should parachute out to safety. But the Soviet designs that we have are faulty on this score. In the air battles over the Bekaa valley last June, the Israelis used the Shafrir air-to-air missile with devastating effect Therefore, the high casualties inflicted on Syrian pilots cannot be attributed to the faulty design of the MiGs, but to the lethal power of these missiles which does not give the pilot a chance to eject.

Johny Mehta, Ahmedabad

'dethroned queen' On a

Congratulations to Udayan Sharma and Tayleen Singh for the cover story, A queen goes to jail, (27 February). In particular, the interview with the queen of queens was really thought-provoking. The photographs by Jagdish Yadav were excellent. St N-DAY has proved its mettle once again T. Appalaswamy, Parvatipuram (Andhra Pradesh)

The cover story was superb. Thanks to SUNDAY.

Himansu Bose, Balasore (Orissa)

An interesting cover story. I read it with a good deal of enthusiasm. Thanks to superintendent of police Rajendra Chaturvedi for effecting her peaceful

K. Narasimha Bhat, Chikmagalur (Karnataka)

Thanks to Sunday for the cover story. S P Chaturvedi has played a marvellous role in ending the reign of terror in MP and UP. The surrender of the two notorious dacoits Malkhan Singh and Phoolan Devi makes one point clear: that such a surrender is possible only when the police use tact instead of force.

M. Anwar Azad Ansari, Bhabua

The cover story on the surrender tainasha was most interesting and it made me wonder why such tamashas get the public worked up

The media has built up Phoolan as a folk become. In the present state of aftairs it is so easy to glority the image of real life outlaws and dacous, it becomes all the more easy when the dacon is a woman who has been fiving with a number of paramours, has reportedly been gangraped by a number of her enemies and friends and whose speech is peppered with not only fourletter words but the foulest three-letter and five-letter Hindi abuses (if one is to believe some of the lady journalists who interviewed her).

What intrigues me most is the attitude of the police and politicians who want these law breakers to surrender rather than be captured. These days, even chief ministers seem to revel in making a tamasha out of everything--from the surrender of a dacoit to the Asiad and the non-aligned summit

A. S. Mehta, Bombay

Phoolan Devi is a venomous snake. Instead of punishing her, the (MP) government is granting all kinds of freedom to her in jail. Billa and Ranga were hanged for having committed the murder of the Chopra children; if that was the penalty for one crime then what will be the punishment for Phoolan Devi who has committed innumerable murders?

T. V. Raghavendran, Calcutta

Sikhs offended

do not know whether the derogatory remark against M. S. Gujral ("I'll get that Sikh out of Rail Bhavan") was really made by A. B. A. Ghani Khan Choudhury or not. But it did find mention in Madhu Jain's report. The railway minister keeps his word (27 February), and I am hereby referring the matter to the Prime Minister and to the president of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee. Amittsar. Whoever is at fault must offer a public apology J. C. Kapoor, Calcutta

I have been directed to point out that on no occasion did Mr A B A. Ghani Khan Choudhury utter those words ("I will get that Sikh out of Rail Bhavan"). It is unfortunate that Madhu Jain put these words in the mouth of the railway minister when she had no basis whatsoever to do so Besides, there were other points in her report which were

Ram Lok, information officer (railways), Press Information Bureau, New Delhi

not based on facts.

The photograph published under Cabinet post for Dr Alexander? (Dethi Diary, 6 March) was of Mr G. Parthasarathy and not as mentioned—Editor



If there is one national nightmar in our country, it is the thought of any it. In that unbelievably the circlevar, Hindus and Muslims butchered there without the least compassion. Now, in Assam and elsewhere event aking place that are evoking memories of the insanity we thought we in a shind. In the last two years in particular, the communal virus has spreadingly to every corner of the country, and its nature is not Hindu-Muslim confrontations alone. In this special issue, the examine the different dimensions of this enormous problem.



How to lance the communal virus

Pre-conceived notions about communities must be banished, writes KHUSHWANT SINGH



BEFORE we set about analysing the causes of communal hatred and suggest means of combating it, we must clear cobwebs of preconceived notions from our

minds. First of all we must brush away the legend that communal difterences were a creation of the British and they played one community against the other to enable them to rule over us. Such differences were there many centuries before the British, as Maulana Mohammad Ali put it very pithily: "We divide and they rule." Rulers have always exploited communal differences to remain in power, the British did it in their time, our politicians do it today. Where people belong to different races, speak different languages, worship different gods, have distinctly different names, dietary habits, modes of dress and ways of

living, it is easy to harp on these differences and create suspicion, fear and hatred. Poverty, idleness, under-employment, economic rivalry, living in congested localities make people ill-tempered and inflammable. All these conditions prevail in India. Causes of conflict do undoubtedly have local variations but whether it is Hindu versus Muslim, Hindu versus Sikh, caste-Hindu versus harijan, adivasi versus plaindweller, it is always a mix of historical, social and economic factors which go to create the animosity that often explodes into violence. By now we know enough of what causes the communal virus. We can dispense with National Integration Councils (what have they achieved anyhow?), put aside asinine reports of the high and the not-so-high powered minority commissions and resign ourselves to the bitter truth that community and communal tensions will continue to plague us for generations to come. We must learn to live with them, the best we can do is to remove as many

irritants as we can and come down much faster and harder on people who perpetrate them.

We should obviously concentrate more on preventive measures than on post-violence post-mortems as we tend to do in commissions of enquiry and criminal trials of miscreants. Commissions' findings are stale diet and criminal trials counterproductive; they are prolonged, no witnesses tell the truth and in the end the worst offenders go scot-free.

We have also tried out many methods of restoring communal harmony. The Gandhian Ram-Raheem or Ishwar-Allah Terev Naam appeal to religion proves efficacious in localities where there are Gandhians who are respected by the citizens. This should not be abandoned. C. Rajagopalachari was right in saying that religion remains our best policeman. Properly conveyed, religion can prove to be an effective antidote against hate People may not learn to love but they will understand that "hating people is like burning down

Opposition leaders addressing gatherings in Moradabad city: how effective are they?



your house to get rid of a rat."

Much has already been said and written but very little done to revise history text-books and expunge factually maccurate and mischievous interpretations of events which perpetuate prejudice between different communities. As a people we know very little about each others' religrous beliefs and practices and far too often that little is grieviously out of focus. This is particularly true about Islam of which most Hindus and Sikhs have a totally distorted picture Muslims are no better informed about Hinduism or Sikhism. As a result all religious communities labour under stereotyped notions of others which are invariably offensive eg. Hindus are cowardly, Muslims are treacherous. Sikhs are stupid. The only way to overcome these irrational prejudices is by exposing the voung to other religious systems and encouraging their participation in each others' religious festivities. Ignorance breeds contempt, knowledge exorcises it "Don't introduce me to that man," said Charles Lamb. "I want to go on hating him, and I can't hate a man whom I know." We must make these introductions to each others' cherished beliefs on a massive scale

The effort should be to convert misunderstanding and hate into understanding and love, "People hate as they love, unreasonably,"

Properly conveyed, religion can prove to be an effective antidote against hate. People may not learn to love but they will understand that "hating people is like burning down your house to get rid of a rat."

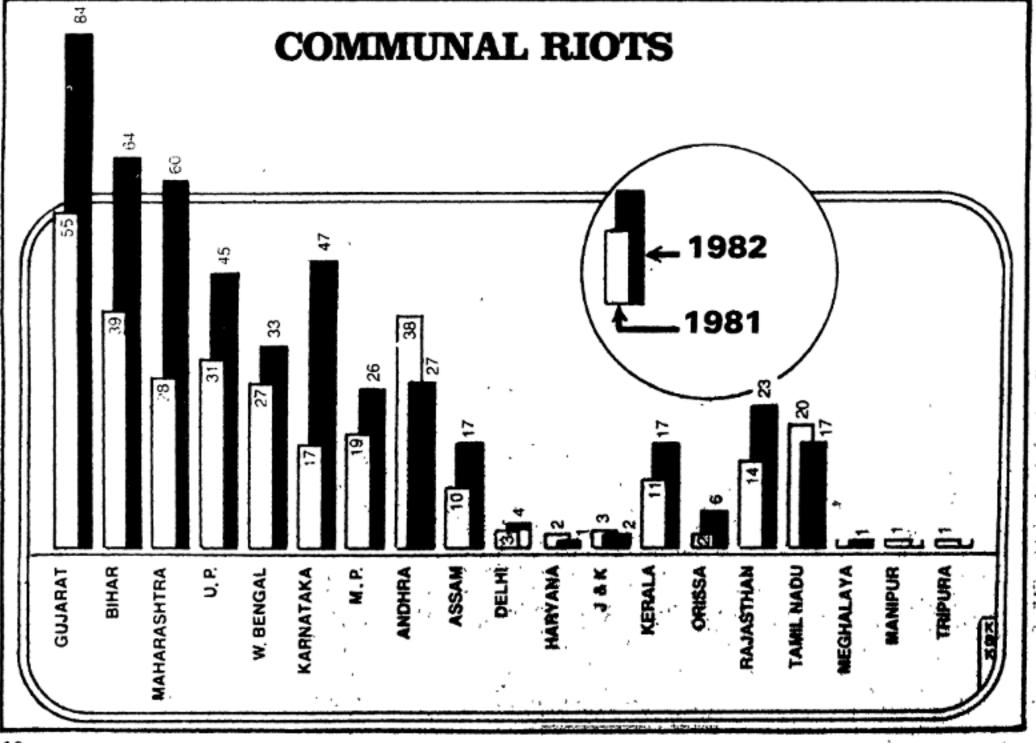
wrote Thackeray. "Revenge proves its own executioner." Amongst the preventive measures, top priority should be placed on intelligence, identification of localities where tensions are endemic and individuals with bad records of spreading communal virus. Failure to forewarn authorities should be regarded as dereliction of duty and punished with denigration in service or dismissal.

The second priority should be given to the restructuring of the peace-keeping force, the police and para-military units like the CRP called on to assist the police when things go out of hand. As a matter of

policy the personnel of these forces should be so selected and positioned that they comprise substantially people belonging to the community which feels itself threatened, Thus, for example, where Muslims are in an endangered minority, the peacekeeping forces should be led and manned largely by Muslims, where the situation is in the reverse, as for example in Kashmir and certain districts in Kerala, the forces should comprise largely of non-Muslims, In Punjab it should be Hindu, in Haryana, Sikh. And so on.

As soon as violence breaks out, the locality where it occurs should be declared a riot area and the peace. keeping force empowered to make arrests without warrants and special courts set up with powers to hold summary trials and sentence culprits to public humiliation like parading with blackened faces, flogging, fines and imprisonment. The sentence of flogging should be carried immediately and in public, collective fines imposed on localities be collected without dispatch to reimburse those who have sustained losses.

These measures are not difficult to implement if there is the will to do so. If the will is lacking, incidents of communal violence will increase in proportion with the increase of population and we will do no more than keep wringing our hands in despair.



Indian Muslims: Somewhere between pampered and persecuted

By RAJENDRA SAREEN



SOME wise men say the Indian Muslims are "pampered." Others argue that they are "persecuted." These are the two extreme views. The truth is somewhere in between.

The "pampered" theory rests on a wilful distortion of the past and the present. The "persecution" argument is the apex of a pyramid raised on a series of half-truths, both historical and contemporary. The former is vicious. The latter is pernicious. Both are propagandistic. Neither is inclined to take into account all the dimensions of a complex human problem which, unless handled sensibly and tactfully, is capable of inflicting immense damage on the country's body politic and avoidable suffering on a large number of people.

The Muslims of India have been more sinned against than sinning. A country was created in their name to which they cannot even go as visitors a without undergoing humiliation and protracted wait for visas which in variably take a long time in coming. They have carried on their shoulders for some 36 years now the burden of their credulity and gullibility and

suffered the fallout of what Maulana Azad described as the "politics of bitterness." They were betrayed and abandoned by the leaders who, acting in their name, perpetrated the most preposterous, though successful, confidence trick of modern times under the title of the "two-nation theory."

A preponderant majority of the effective segment of the Muslim community today constitutes those who were below 15 at the time of independence or were born thereafter. They carry no part of the guilt complex for having been instrumental in the partition of India. But they have had harrowing experiences with what happened in the wake of that. The Muslim's of India have been the victims of the partition. The Hindus have been its principal beneficiaries purely in the communal sense. I say this in full awareness of all the disaster and destruction through which those migrating from Pakistan passed. Both Hindus and-Muslims have lost in the larger perspective of strategic interests. The hostile relationship between India and Pakistan during the last 36 years has served to diminish both countries jointly and severally. But the partition having become a reality cannot be reversed without wading through a river of blood. The conse-

quent turmoil would serve no pr pose. It is in everybody's interest stabilise and consolidate the polit. al arrangement that emerged 1947. And the secular polity of Ind is central to that objective If Ind had gone the way of Pakistan in 19 and turned its back on secularisi partition would have collapsed b cause Pakistan could not have su vived the impact of total transfer the Muslim population from Indi The bonanza of evacuee assets le behind in that country by the force exodus of the comparatively well-o Hindus and Sikhs would not hav sufficed to meet the strains of tot migration of Muslims from India.

As for India, the bintal excessi without which there was no way forcing all the Muslims out could n but have dehumanised Indian soci ty to an extent that all the mora human, social and ethical values i tegral to a civilised polity wou. have become extinct. How in the event could we have evolved a soci ty capable of accommodating regio al, ethnic and linguistic diversitie So Indian secularism was not favour done to the Muslims but sensible "and realistic response terms of India's national ethos. It no use taunting Indian secularis with snide remarks for what d happen in 1947, as the contemporal exponents of the "politics of bitte ness" are wont to do. One must be: in mind what was successfully pr vented from happening. It any mod is necessary by way of eluculation one need only consider what ha pened to the minorities in Pakista and what their state is in social economic and political terms i Bangladesh. Compare these two relife models with the reality in Indithe failures and lapses notwitstanding.

One hears these days a lot about Hindu "backlash" and "chanvir ism." Both these were operating a all their ugly manifestations in 194 just as they are contributing the mite to the worsening of the conmunal situation in the country toda.

Ransacked police station in Moradabad 🦠





But the point to remember is that an end was put to the orgy of violence in 1947. Indian polity successfully diffused the communal polarisation as a response to Gandhiji's martyrdom and the popular mind disowned communalism and its proponents. Otherwise we would not be discussing the matter now. Both negative and positive emotions coexist in human beings. It is the task of political leaders to isolate and defuse the former and promote the latter. It is equally the task of all thinking people to adopt appropriate measures to evoke a political response.

It has become trite to run down Indian secularism. Pakistan has been doing it since 1947, though in recent years such propaganda has considerably diminished. The Hindu communalists argue with diabolic cunning that what the Constitution provides is an irrelevance. Hinduism itself is secular and all that is required is that one should stop talking about socio-economic and political imbalances because that promotes communal consciousness according to this view of things. Those who lag

behind, let them be.

The Muslim communalist argument proceeds on the assumption that a bigotry is exclusively a characterisite of the Hindus. According to a recent article in The Radiance weekly, a spokesman of the Jamaat-e-Islami, said, secularism is a sham because it provides a cover for the "lack of social justice (for the) minorities. Lack of catholicity coupled with narrow-mindedness and small-heartedness of the bigots is likely to revive the atmosphere of 1947...it was this very mental attitude that led to the partition of the country..." Some logic this. Because the Hindus were bigots, so to get level with them the Muslims decided to commit political harakıri and throw overboard those who would stay back among the bigots.

The partition only resulted in the split up of the Muslims of the country, divesting the components that stayed behind, of its political clout and social leverage by destroying the basis of the composite culture that developed as a result of the centuries of interaction among the two communities. Since the bigots have not mended their ways, the exponents of the concept of Allah ki hukamrani would, perhaps, want Indian secularism to be repudiated. Hopefully this should solve the problems of the "persecuted" Muslims. How perverse the faithful can become in their make-believe.

It is frequently argued that the two-nation theory collapsed in 1971 with the emergence of Bangladesh. In fact, it was repudiated when Mahatma Gandhi declined on 15 August 1947, to participate in the freedom festivities and instead undertook a fast in Calcutta to bring the Hindus and Muslims back to the path

of sanity from which they had strayed into the quagmire of fratricidal violence. The partition of India represented the collective failure of the national leadership to evolve a viable framework for the country's polity. Pakistan is now a sovereign nation and the refusal to accept the dubious validity of the two-nation theory is not in any way calculated to question the reality of Pakistan as a sovereign nation. The issue is essentially internal to India and its people.

The contemporary reality in respect of the Muslims is that they have suffered a considerable erosion in their share in the national endeavour. The accumulated backlog of deprivation is glaringly manifest. The socio-economic and political implications of this imbalance cannot be ignored. On the other hand, it does not help when the Muslim leaders ignore the attitudes and developments that culminated in this situation. Diabetes is a debilitating disease, but its treatment does not consist of a diet of sweets and carbohydrates. Instead the patient has to be administered measured doses of insulin. To build up an atmosphere of confrontation and hostility is not the way to go about it. The need is to bring about amity and reconciliation. Deprivation will not

turn into fulfilment simply by nurs-

ing grievances and getting lost in the

maze of frustration.

Those who find it politically profitable to accentuate the "persecution" psychosis would do well to remember that it was precisely this approach that culminated in the disaster that overtook the Muslims of India in 1947. What the Muslims need today is self-confidence, not prophets of doom who sap their morals, courage and determination. What they need is not fear and fatalism, but a sense of their destiny, not drift, but a vision for the future, not loss of a sense of purpose and direction, but a coherent and logical assertion of their rights, not irrational aggressiveness, but a clear and realistic evaluation of the political system of the country, not turning their backs on its processes in pique and anger, and, last but not the least, a strategy to forge ahead in quest of justice and equity through social and political action and not abandonment of the effort in frustration.

Viewed from this angle the memorandum presented by 45 Muslim MPs is a correct thing done in a wrong manner. There was urgent need to bring into focus at the national level the menace of increasing incidents of communal violence. It was equally important to underscore the recent trend of the law and order agencies losing their impartial role as instruments of state. But the rhetoric and the not-so implicit suggestion that the rising graph of communal incidents is part of a grand design to connive at the "atrocities"

against the minorities" hardly seems calculated to defuse the tension. Nor do the authors of the memorandum seem bothered by the recurring manifestations of aggressiveness which cannot be brushed under the rug by complaining with injured innocence that the Muslim is being "projected as the aggressor, as a rebel and as a traitor..." Any honest attempt to find a solution for the canker of communalism will have to shun the temptation of offering alibis because any effort to cover up will frustrate the whole purpose.

Even if certain elements among the Muslims are provocatively aggressive, there can be no excuse for the police authorities ceasing to function as instruments of law and order and instead beginning to wreak vengeance. But does it help take the point further when the 45 Muslim MPs fail to take notice of the manifestations of Muslim agressiveness? Two policemen were killed in Aligarh and a marriage party of harijans was beaten up in Moradabad in 1980 prior to the horrible riots that year. The Meerut riots were a result of the communal interaction and while the lapses and excess of the authorities are no doubt a matter of national shame, how can one turn a blind eye to the nefarious role of the political leaders? Earlier last month, a police party was assaulted in a Haryana village when it went there to investigate a case of cowslaughter. The result was communal tension and five innocent Muslims were thrown out of a moving train. In Kerala, the Trivandrum riots were sparked off by an assault on the police on duty. Is it central to the interests of the Muslims to engage in cow-slaughter and resort to riots every time a procession with a band passes outside a mosque? By the same logic, is it an integral part of Hindu ethos to have a band in tow every time a social and religious procession is to pass before a mosque?

At another level is the kind of response made by the Muslim leaders to Meenakshipuram conversions. The Muslim press and political comment on that occasion spoke of conversions as an instrument of changing the demographic composition of India. There was talk of another partition if the Hindus did not behave. Syed Shahabuddin saw in Meenakshipuram "a continuing struggle between secularism and communalism.". In an otherwise lucid analysis of the event, Mr Shahabuddin argued that "conversion to Islam should create no stigma, cause no reproach, raise no eyebrows... The (Hindu) reaction shows that secularism is still nothing more than a veneer, a facade... Our secularism lies exposed and battered." If one were to go by that logic all that is requred to consolidate and strengthen secularism is to set up a shuddhi centre in a corner of Jama Masjid in Delhi and a tableeghi jamaat in the Vishwanath Temple at Benaras.



THERE is a tendency superficially to proceed on the assumption that the Hindus and Muslims are two monoliths in a state of confrontation. This view of the matter does

not take into account the large array of linguistic and regional variations of the problem. A host of purely local issues and socio-economic tensions and political factors arising over everyday affairs culminate in outbursts and these begin to merge into a mosaic of nationwide antagonism. The manifestations of Hindu-Muslim interaction vary from state to state. For example, the character of the problem in Kashmir has nothing in common with what is in the rest of the country—UP, Bihar, MP, Rajasthan and Maharashtra have both the communal syndrome as well as specific localised causes of tension between the two communities. In the south, the nature of the problem is totally different from what it is in the Hindi heartland. In the east, it has many strains which are common to all the states of the eastern region, but at the same time there are distinct peculiarities in each of these states and none of them have anything in common with the rest of the country. But, whichever way you look at it, it does not add up to the spectre of an aggressive majority arraigned against a beleaguered minority.

It is important to think out ways to stabilise Hindu-Muslim relations, identify the factors responsible for leaving the Muslims out of the benefits of development and adopt effective measures to correct the imbalances that have developed. Immediately after partition the Muslim middle class which could have provided the elite leadership to the community migrated from India in a big way leaving a void. That process continued for another 15 years. Now, when a youngman passed an examination, be it from Aligarh or from any other college, he found it easy to find a job in Pakistan. His relations were there. The lure of Pakistan as a land of opportunity tempted them. But the net result was that for 20 years the Muslims of India were deprived of the rise of a middle class which comprises professional men and women who can be instrumental in generating further employment. But the Muslims in the services who refused to migrate did as well as their-colleagues of the other communities. And so did many of the new recruits who sought opportunities in India and were able to do



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so, it was more a question of the solim withdrawal from the Indian ial and economic scene than a estion of deliberate denial. The ndus did not make an issue of it. ley found it quite convenient and I nothing to correct the situation. ley did not do anything specifically deprive the Muslims and the Muslis themselves keept out. That proses changed in the Sixties when the bortunities started diving up in

Pakistan. The next ten years constituted the two and a half decades of mental the two and a half decades of mental there but then reality had changed.

The two and a half decades of mental there but then reality had changed.

After 1971, the position underwent a total metamorphosis. The lure having faded earlier, the opportunities already finished, the barriers which came up between the two countries proved to be a blessing in disguise. Whatever hardship the Muslims of India faced in this period, they finally came face to face with the truth

tal dichotomy and ambivalence ended. The sum total of this is that for 25 years the time virtually passed the Muslims by and these were the years when India made tremendous and phenomenal developmental progress with all kinds of economic opportunities offering themselves. It will take some time before the neglect of earlier years can be corrected. There can be no argument that the process needs to be accelerated. Even though realities on the ground. leave much to be desired, it will only impair the process of socio-economic revival of the Muslim community to lose sight of the fact that national commitment to secularism provides the framework for movement forward.

There is no gainsaying the urgent need to help the Muslims tide over the lag that has developed. The government ought to streamline its arrangements to monitor socioeconomic imbalances on the ground as well as the developing tensions. There is a vast area that can be covered through administrative steps. It could not be entirely on the basis of merit that police forces, for example, recruit so few Muslims. Prior to 1947, there used to be 70 per cent of them. But those who argue that police and service recruitments alone can help the Muslims tide over their problems might ponder over the fact that even when the Muslims had a level of representation they can never again hope to attain, the community was so powerfully driven' by a sense of insecurity that it opted for the partition of the country. So, while the government measures are no doubt important, the key to the problem lies in political handling of the gamut of factors having a bearing on this matter.

There can be no real progress unless the country begins building up a composite culture and moves towards socio-economic integration. This will not be a throwback to what was there prior to 1947. But it it is to be viable and credible, it will be something in which each component of the nation has an effective and vibrant role. The Muslim leadership should realise that a siege mentality: within the community cannot but limit its capacity to make a worthwhile contribution in this regard. Any attempt to perpetuate the status quo on the part of the Hindus is manifestly untenable in the face of objective realities. Műslims will have to get out of the withdrawal ... syndrome that overtook them in the wake of independence. Hindus will have to come forward to help them move ahead towards increased participation in the national affairs.

Why not hold a series of joint sessions of the Majlis, Mushawarath and the Virat Hindu Samaj? Agenda: ""
Indian nationalism.

The ruling party engineers communal riots'

Maulana Abdulla Bukhari tells Sunday



Maulana Syed Abdulla Bukhari, the Shahi Imam of the historic Jama Masjid, Delhi, emerged after the 1977 elections when he campaigned against Mrs Gan-

i and the Emergency. His record is been less wholesome after that, a has certainly become, however, a most famous mullah in the untry. Excerpts from his interew with Jagmeet Uppal.

Q: What is your opinion about the nversions going on in the couny? Both Hindu and Muslim orgasations are trying to convert ople.

A: If those who are converted cept the new religion because of eir belief and conviction then I ve no objections. Although I have ad a lot about so-called converns I do not really know the truth. e grandson of Nawab Chattari, it s claimed, has been converted to induism though the family of the **≱wab has said that they have no** lation with the so-called grandh. But the Hindu organisations **ve** shown unduc interest in this nversion and given it publicity. It s even rumoured that my daughand a professor will also get nverted to Hinduism. This is noing but an attempt to harass a eticular community. If this is con**fsion,** it is a joke.

2: But a number of Muslims have en converted to Hinduism in Rathan.

this is only a publicity it, it is an attempt to create blems for other communities. If hey or any other inducement given or used to get people

converted then it is a fraud, I condemn it,

Q: What about Meenakshipuram? A: As I have said if conversions there have taken place with full faith, conviction and belief then it is all right.

Q: I am not going into the causes of conversion, but don't you think that such activities will lead to communal tension in the country?

A: Do you think there is no communal tension in the country now? From 1947 to 1980 there have been 20,000 communal riots and in the last two years there have been 1,200 riots. This is not my statement. I am quoting government sources. And as you know the government always tries to play down such data. You can well imagine how many riots have taken place so far. It hardly matters. Already lakhs of people have been killed and if a few more are killed it will not make any difference.

Q: Who is behind these riots?

A: See, In the north, trade is exclusively in the hands of Hindus while the Muslims are small artisans, workers, petty shopkeepers and government servants. In the south, Muslims also have a big share in the trade. Obviously no businessman will like riots because. he will lose his business. Riots are always planned to create problems and tensions for a particular community. Sometimes it is the opposition but most of the time it is the ruling party which engineers these riots. Because the ruling party does not want these two (Hindus and Muslims) to live peacefully. A former chief minister of Bihar told me that communal riots are organised at the behest of the centre and the chief minister has to act according to the directions.

Major disturbances

1 March 1982.

KANYAKUMARI, Tamil Nadu.

A war of loudspeakers, during the Mandaikkadu temple festival, between the Hindu Seva Sangam at the temple and Christian fishermen at Saint Louisa's shrine which is 300 feet away from the temple, caused the clashes between Hindus and Christians.

Deaths: Nine.

■26 April 1982.

AMRITSAR, Punjab.

The discovery of the heads of two slaughtered cows outside two shrines became the focal point of the riots. Deaths: One.

■16 May 1982.

PHULWARISHARIF, Bihar.

A quarrel between Muslims and Hindus over the grazing of cattle took a violent turn.

Deaths: Seven.

■11 June 1982.

PULIANGUDI, Tamil Nadu.

Muslims and converted Harijans clashed with members of the Thevar community over the entry into the village of a Hindu propaganda van, "Gnana Rathnam," of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad.

Deaths: 17.

■24 July 1982.

DĔĽHĬ

Fight between the children of two communities, Muslims and Balmikis, took a serious turn, resulting in widespread arson.

Deaths: Two.

26 July 1982.

ALIGARH, Uttar Pradesh.

The conflict broke out between two groups of Muslims, Quraishis and Pathans, which was sparked by an argument between two thelawallas selling halim and biryani.

Deaths: Two.

■6 September 1982.

MEERUT, Uttar Pradesh

A dispute over a Shiv temple and a mazar in two adjoining buildings in the highly sensitive Shahgasa area, assumed colossal proportions, breaking out on a large scale.

Deaths: 31.

■22 September, 1982.

MORADABAD, Uttar Pradesh

Trouble began here when two bodies were found with head injuries.

Deaths: Five.

■13 December 1982.

BARODA, Gujarat.

Widespread reaction against the transfer of the city's police commissioner, Jashpal Singh, led to the riots.

Deaths: 12.

■29 December 1982.

ALLEPPEY, Kerala.

A member of a procession which was moving in celebration of the Nabi day was attacked by the police. A 25-year-old youth, Kabir, was killed in the melee. Deaths: One.

■From January 1983 till the time of writing. ASSAM

Government sources report that 1,344 people have been killed in communal violence.

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The face of Indian communalism

By NIKHIL CHAKRAVARTTY



IN Indian political parlance communalism is generally meant to denote the problems relating to the Muslim minority population. There are other minorities in this coun-

try-the Christians, the Parsis, the Sikhs for instance, but generally the term, communalism, is hardly used with reference to them. By and large, the disharmony and tension between the Hindus constituting the majority community, and the Muslims, the largest single minority in this country, are referred to as the communal problem.

During the British rule, it was confidently claimed by the nationalist camp that communal acrimony and tension sometimes leading to bloody clashes, were the handiwork of the foreign ruler who was following the Roman imperial strategy of divide-and-rule. The corollary that followed from this understanding was that once the British rule ended, there would be no communal problem in this country. By plain logic

this should have been the case. But historical developments do not emerge in isolation. Many factors contribute to the building of a situation. Communalism is, therefore, not simply the product of the British raj. Rather it would be more correct to say that the raj had taken advantage of the communal differences and to a large measure accentuated them for its own purpose. This is not the same thing as to say that communalism is the invention of British imperial strategy in this country.

A very sketchy perusal of British rule in India shows that the imperial power did not care to favour one community in preference to another: it only took advantage of any sign of misunderstanding among the communities to fan disunity. It is a matter of history that in the terrible repression that followed the mutiny of 1857, the Muslims were largely the target of British attack, and the conspicuous deprivation of the Muslim aristocracy particularly in north India began in that period. Again, when the national movement assumed a mass character, the British tried to whip up loyalist groups against it-at some places lending a

helping hand to ultra-Hindu groups, at other places, to a Muslim communalist group. Let it not be forgotten that it was not the Muslim League alone but the Hindu Mahasabha which was set up by the British against the national movement led by the Congress. The moderates or loyalists came from both the communities. When the Congress under Gandhiji joined hands with the Khilafat, the prospect of Hindu-Muslim unity at the mass level worried the British rulers, and they contrived to encourage communal riots to create bitter disunity in the national front

There is another aspect of the communal issue which needs to be kept in mind. With their strategic objective against the Bolshevik power in Central Asia, the British policy makers looked upon the Punjab and the North-West Frontier of undivided India as a very important bastion: it was this which explains the ruthlessness with which the British tried to suppress the national movement-and succeeded too in a good measure—in Punjab and the northwestern zone. The manner in which Badshah Khan's Khudai Khidmatgar movement was planfully attacked and paralysed by Olaf Caroe and his boys brings out this point very

sharply.

The British also took advantage of the growing misunderstanding between the Congress and the Muslim League particularly in the Thirties. A strictly objective appraisal of the Congress movement in those days brings out a peculiar dichotomy: while it assumed the form of an unprecedented mass upsurge, there was inadequacy in it in so far as it had not worked out a strategy of blocking any British move to sow misunderstanding in the Muslim minority population. The scars left behind by the communal riots of the late Twenties had not healed. Realising the inevitability of the Congress going in for a militant mass movement as noticed in the civil disobedience campaign, the British encouraged and foisted the separate electorate system which sought to isolate the Muslim community from the mainstream of the Congress. The Congress leadership, in its turn, did not perhaps realise the enormity of the British strategy as could be seen from the exchanges that took place between Nehru and the Muslim League leaders in UP. In the late Thirties, what it did was to start the Muslim mass contact programme

Shops set ablaze by rioters in Hyderabad



which became totally ineffective. Step by step, the Muslim League, encouraged by the British, moved towards Pakistan. The point to note here is that as the mass movement under the Congress leadership gained in momentum, the move for vivisection simultaneously began to

take shape.

Without going into the history of the partition—which is not the purpose of this article—one cannot escape noting that the argument on which the Congress leaders acquiesced in the partition was that once this was agreed upon, it would bring to an end all communalism, at least in that part of the country which would be in India. The massive exodus of population both ways leaving behind its bloody trail of vicious communal hatred, was strangely enough not anticipated by any leader, barring Gandhiji.

For an understanding of the communal problem that faces our country today, it is necessary to have an understanding of the impact of the partition on the psychological makeup of both the majority and the minority community in this country. The average Hindu began to look upon the Muslim with embittered frustration, as if he was responsible for the partition of the motherlandlittle realising that the Muslim who chose to stay behind in India has not only demonstrated his love for his native soil, but has taken physical risk in doing so, facing a future amidst a population, the bulk of which is embittered against the political leadership of his community. The average Muslim, in turn, suddenly finding himself in an abnormally tense environment created by all the horrors of partition, imperceptibly began to look upon Pakistan

as the safe haven for his community. Instead of helping in the process of national integration, the partition engineered the psychological fragmentation of the national ethos. This could be seen in 1971-72 when at the height of the nation-wide euphoria over the liberation of Bangladesh, the Muslim community—barring its enlightened fringe-was in a state of confusion if not distress, at the bifurcation of Pakistan itself. With all the accolades showered on Mountbatten and his so-called mission, it is worth reminding ourselves that the partition tried to perpetuate communal animosity within India.

part from the accursed legacy of the partition, there is another important factor that has contributed to the protracted longevity of communalism in independent India. Statistically, it can hardly be gainsaid that the communal virus has not only survived but has grown since independence. This is, to a very large measure, due to our electoral system and the manner in which we have run it. With every political party engaged in the battle for seats in Parliament and state legislatures, the question of "nursing the constituency" has become the major preoccupation, if not obsession, of everybody in politics: and this reduced itself to a painstaking exercise of how to grab majority support in the constituency. Both caste and communal appeals have become an essential part of electioneering. Every political worker knows—and so does the election commission-how ineffective, if not judicrous, have been all the rules and regulations against making communal appeals during an election campaign. In fact, the most successful election manager is the person who can make the right caste and communal permut tions and combinations to get the majority support behind his candidate.

As a rule, the minority community anywhere in the world tends to with the establishment. In India, th Congress could get the benefit of th vote-bank so long as it commande the monolith of power. Certain Nehru's anti-communal outloc helped to foster the feeling amor the Muslim masses that the Congre would protect them; but the ove riding consideration that made th Muslims by and large the elector camp-follower of the Congress wa the understandable tendency of the minority community to seek the she ter of those who wield power.

Once the Congress monopoly power was broken—first in the state in 1967 and then at the centre : 1977—the Muslim community, par cularly its leaders, realised that the could no longer depend on the Co gress for protection, and by ar large, they adjusted themselves the changing winds. If one close observes the situation, one gets the impression that this developmen has the possibility of throwing up band of leaders from within th Muslim community that can bargai with the power brokers for not on. protection but loaves and fishes (office as well. Kerala has shown th way in this respect. This develop ment brings out also the fact that or political parties have degenerated t mere players in the election game Instead of bringing about a renewe sense of national integration, the move about in search of crumbs or of the electoral garbage can.

There is a lot of talk nowaday about the need for revamping or

CASUALTIES IN COMMUNAL CLASHES

| | | | KILLED | | | | | | INJURED | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| No. of incidents | Hindus | Muslims | Others | Police | Total | | Hindus | Muslims | Others | Police | Total |
| 346 519 521 321 240 242 248 205 169 188 | 24 66 68 38 21 26 26 11 20 | 99 558 176 65 45 45 61 22 19 24 | 10 49 54 3 1 | 1 | 133 674 298 103 70 72 87 33 39 36 | | 455 796 656 603 541 643 566 444 391 563 | 451 1000 731 606 407 456 435 277 330 385 | 403 806 220 54 108 169 122 169 40 63 | 240 275 116 67 151 232 143 72 33 111 | 1549 2877 1723 1330 1207 1500 1266 962 794 1122 1801 |
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"secularist ideals." A dispassionate view of India's development will make it amply clear that secularism in the correct sense of the word—the renaissance ideal in Europe as distinct from the clerical outlook-has never been part of our national ethos. It might have touched outstanding personalities like Nehru; but the average Indian patriot has been a tolerant person. Gandhi looked upon tolerance (as distinct from secularism) as the only way to forge links and mutual confidence among different communities particularly between the Hindus and the Muslims in the background of the "partition legacy, and he faced martyrdom in that noble crusade.

Despite the fact that our economy has moved towards a modern industrial set-up, the superstructure of a modern industrial culture has not permeated our social fabric. Although it would be a simplistic expectation that communalism will disappear on its own with the establishment of industrial culture, there is no doubt that the basis of communal outlook gets eroded in a modern

socio-economic set-up.

More urgently, what is necessary is the development of a sturdy national ethos which can combat the communal mentality. This is a multidimensional task, and it demands stern self-introspection. Very often, many of us look upon the minority community, particularly the Muslim

community, as being cooped up in its own shell: no doubt, the teachings of Islam and its practice through centuries, have fostered a transnational "dutlook, which need not be regarded as anti-national. If a devout Catholic in the USA paying allegiance to the Papacy in the Vatican can be a good American citizen, there is no reason to doubt the patriotism of any devout Muslim turning to Mecca for light. If it is a question of money pouring in from the oil-rich She khs of Arabia, a careful accounting may show that the people who have handled those coffers and have benefited from them are more non-Muslims than Muslims. No doubt there is narrow parochialism in the Muslim community, a tendency that tends to come up in any minority community afflicted with the psychology of the besieged. It is the duty of the enlightened elements of the Muslim community to strive to inculcate a broad socioeconomic outlook among the Muslim

But more imperative is the need for the majority community to bend backward to combat all forms of communal chauvinism, overt and covert. Often one hears sanctimonious talks about Hinduism being so tolerant as being able to absorb people from all faiths. Vivekananda ripped open this cant and exposed the curse of the caste system. Almost imperceptibely a Hindu outlook

masses as well as the intelligentsia.

creeps into our thought and action. To take a small example, nobody had calculatedly planned to keep out Muslim names to christen a number of stadia that were built during the Asiad; but isn't it odd that in this city of Delhi, studded with the ruins of the grandeur that was the Moghul empire, nobody could think of naming one stadium, at least the place for the equestrian events after Babur. The beautiful Sanskritised song composed specially for the Asiad inauguration has won applause: it was certainly very moving, but a heart-warming song like Iqbal's immortal Sare Jahan Sey Achha, Hindustan Hamara could not have failed to touch the heart of millions who listened to the programme. Wouldn't that have been the biggest public relations exercise about the Indian ethos before the Pakistanis and those other outsiders who are fed with tripe about Hindu domination in India?

Combating communalism is an urgent national task. It needs to be taken up on all fronts—with the intellectual vigilance of a Nehru and the death-defying determination of a Gandhi. Beyond the confines of election politics, the call has to go out to millions in our crowded cities and distant villages, among men and women, young and old. Indian patriotism will be corroded if it fails to be vigilant against communalism, day and night, round the year.

'Attacks on any religion should be made a penal offence'

Maulana Abul Lais Nadvi Islahi, president, Jamaat-e-Islami, told Sunday



Q: What are the reasons for the frequent communal riots? What measures are necessary to eliminate them?

A: It is highly regrettable that communal riots

continue even so many years after independence These are ugly blots on our country. One reason for this is that due to various reasons a feeling of hatred and mistrust between various communities and groups has been generated. To our great misfortune; there are certain elements which, instead of removing these feelings, are engaged in further fanning them.

To check communal violence it is necessary that prompt notice should be taken of all the activities aimed at inciting violence.

disparaging attacks on any religion or religious personalities should be made a penal offence and all those indulging in the same should be sternly dealt with. The textbooks and educational institutions should be cleansed of all traces of communalism, narrowmindedness and prejudices and should be made the medium for promoting unity and integration. Along with this, it is also necessary that all the rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the country for all the religious, cultural and linguistic minorities should be enforced with complete honesty.

In addition to these measures, it is also necessary that, through proper education and training and through mass media, efforts should be directed towards creating a good atmosphere in the country so that the qualities of good conduct, re spect for other's rights and mutual

good behaviour are promoted among all.

Q: The Jamaat-e-Islami is often charged that it takes a leading part in converting people to Islam and employs all sorts of means for this

purpose. Is it true?

A: The charge is wholly unfounded. As for conversion, we beneve that the Constitution of our country acknowledges it as a right for every citizen to accept any faith he chooses. However, we are opposed to, as Islam is, the use of any force or coercion or temptation, or improper inducements. I have repeatedly asserted in various public meetings that those who embrace Islam under any mundane temptation or to promote some interests of their own, will in fact do no good to either themselves or to Islam.

Interview by M. AFZAL

Communalism in modern India

GIRISH MATHUR analyses how during the independence movement a wedge was driven between Hindus and Muslims

For purposes of this article "modern India" means "India under British rule and after." But it is not proposed to cover the entire period in this article. Only one or two incidents will be mentioned to bring out the intended point.



IT is difficult to define "communalism," for, in India secularism and communalism have acquired meanings not conveyed by either of the terms to English-speaking peo-

ple elsewhere in the world. If communalism is taken to mean such conflicts between two communities as have roots in religion, then demands like those of Pakistan in the pre-Independence days or Khalistan in more recent days cannot be treated as communal. These and similar demands—representation, reservation, separate or joint electorate reflect political urges of the rival elites of the social groups which happen to owe allegiance to different religions.

If communalism is taken to meanphenomenon which led to these demands, then religious questions such as conversions, Suddhi, Tabligh, and the like cannot be treated as communal issues. The right of conversion is inherent in the fundamental principle of freedom of religion.

If both aspects—political urges and religious questions—are club-bed together, the result is the religio-politicisation of group conflict which is a typically Indian phenomenon. It is not group conflict which is peculiar to India, you have it in every modern society, and almost everywhere it occasionally becomes as sharp and as bloody as in India. Religio-politicisation, however, creates problems of defining communalism in terms of group conflicts in the modern Indian context.

There is another complicating factor. The demarcation line between the modern period and the earlier one is the freedom of India from colonial rule. In the past also India faced foreign invasions, but the invaders either went back after looting the country or they settled down. British rule, however, stayed on as an alien imposition. Everywhere in the world in the modern (colonial) period, the urge for freedom from foreign rule finds expression in two ways. One is a feeling of helplessness in which case the strength to bear with the present lot is sought to be derived by creating a mythology of past glory, which generates nostalgia. The other is the urge to learn from the present state of material loss and psychological humiliation to outdo the rulers in the fields in which they show excellence and to seek independence to build a brighter future. In India also foreign rule led to these two opposite responses.

Thus, not merely was the normal group conflict religio-politicised, its political aspect had two features, one backward-looking with an yearning to revive an imaginary past, and the other forward-looking marked by a desire to modernise Indian society and take it to the level of, if not surpass, the advanced societies. The so-called Wahabi movement among the Muslims and revivalist or reformist movements among the Hindus as the Arya Samaj, are two of the backward-looking. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's Aligarh Movement and the Congress-led struggle for Independence are examples of forwardlooking responses.

To take up the two forwardlooking responses to the British rule, it needs to be pointed out that there were occasions when the two converged. We find Sir Syed campaigning with Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea in 1877 for equal opportunities and facilities for Indians to enter the ICS. But the conflict between Sir Syed's

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movement and the Congress began after the founding session of the Congress at Bombay in 1885, a resolution calling for "reform and expansion of the supreme and local legislative councils by the admission of the considerable proportion of elected members and the creation of a similar council for the North Western Provinces and Oudh," was passed. (The Uttar Pradesh of today was then called the North Western Provinces and Oudh.)

He could not have opposed the induction of elected representatives in these legislative bodies on principle. He in fact was the first Indian to have asked for popular participation in the governance of the country, in his brochure Ashabe Baghawate Hind" (the causes of the Indian revolt), published immediately after the 1857 events, he had emphasised that it was the unrepresentative character of the British rule in India which had led to the rebellion.

He could not have been opposed to representation by election because Hindus, being the majority community, would get the lion's share. His attitude to Hindu Muslim relations was that the two were like the eyes of a man whose face would look ugly if one of them was in bad shape and that being educationally more advanced the Hindus were duty bound to help the Muslims to come up which they could not do on their own because of their religious prejudices.

The real reason of Sir Syed's opposition to the Congress resolution was that he was afraid that elected bodies would come to be dominated by the Bengalis about whom he once said, "I confess in our country only Bengalis are such a nation of whom one can be proud and the enlightenment we have had in education, liberty and patriotism has been due to them. I can honestly say that they occupy the topmost position among all the people of India."

Sir Syed's campaign against the Congress began at a meeting under the auspices of the British India Association (not a Muslim organisa tion) at Lucknow which Hindu and Muslim taluquedars and other leading personalities attended. He put is straight to his audience whether a

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men of noble birth they would like to be dominated over by the Bengali commoners who had an advantage in education over them. And the organisation he formed as a rival to the Congress was called Patriotic Association open alike to Hindu and Muslim "men of noble birth."

Thus, Sir Syed's opposition to the Congress was the product of intraelite rivalry. It cannot be described as communal. The response of the Congress to Sir Syed's opposition

was on two planes.

To remove Muslim apprehensions about dominance by the majority community in the Congress, the following rule was adopted: "No subject shall be passed for discussion by the subjects committee or allowed for discussion at any congress by the president thereof, to the introduction of which the Hindu or Mohammedan delegates as a body object, unanimously or nearunanimously, and that if after discussion of any subject which has been admitted for consideration it shall appear that all the Hindu or Mohammedan delegates as a body are unanimously or near-unanimously opposed to it, such resolution shall be dropped."

At another level, the Congress leaders approached the ulemas (religious learned men) of Ludhiana, Jullundur, Hoshiarpui, Kapurthala, Amritsar, Chapra, Gujarat, Jaunpur, Ferozepur, Kasur, Muzaffarnagar, Delhi, Rampur, Bareilly, Moradabad **and even M**edina and Baghdad, and **obtained** from them a fatwa (religious decree) calling upon the Muslims to keep away from Sir Syed's patriotic association and make common cause with their Hindu brethern in the Congress. They ordained that Islam enjoined upon them to keep away from those who served the opponents of Islam and to join hands with followers of other religions for the common benefit of Muslims and others.

The fatwa should be viewed in the context of the Muslim situation in the country in these days. Most of the signatory ulemas numbering over 100, belonged to the Waliellahi school a puritanical, fundamentalist and revivalist sect which was described by the British as Wahabi although it had no link with the Wahabis of Arabia. When the British entered Delhi in 1807 and the Mughal emperor was reduced to a titular head, Walhullah Dehalvi's son Shah Abdul Aziz who then headed the school established by his **father**, issued a fatwa declaring the **British** controlled territory as *Dar-U1* **Harb** (the land of war) since the Muslims could no longer perform their religious duties without let or **finde**rance.

One section of Shah Abdul Aziz's followers took up jehad (holy war) followers the British, another section took to propagating through reli-

The Gandhian formula of the two communities coming together could not eliminate the causes of either group conflict or intra-elite rivalry, but instead, it served the same purpose as a separate electorate which the Congress opposed.

gious education the teachings of the founder of the school, Walkullah, and later became the most advanced section of the leadership of the 1857 revolt. They were the only group who never surrendered to the British. After 1857, some of the *Ulemas* who had participated in the revolt, went away to Medina and Baghdad and some settled down in the schools they opened in village mosques, and the most important of these schools became the Darul Ulum at Deoband.

The essence in practice of their teaching was to keep the Muslim masses out of the cultural influence of the British and to minimise political contact between the two. Sir Syed, who was himself a product of the school of Shah Abdul Aziz, met with stiff resistance from these ulemas in his efforts to spread knowledge among the Muslims through his translation of English books into local languages, and the establishment of educational institutions.

The response of the Congress to his opposition, was, to confer on both the communities the right to veto any consideration of a subject relating to the exclusive interests of one or the other of them as distinct from subjects of common interest to both. Can this be described as a secular or a national approach? If secularism means nationalism and nationalism stands for the interests of the nation as a whole, it was not impossible to work out a common approach even on subjects of exclusive interest to one or the other community from a rational or national position with patience, goodwill and understanding. Instead, a short-cut was sought which could not resolve the issues of conflict between the two communities.

On the other plane, the Congress leadership sought to draw into the intra-elite conflict religious learned men who were opposed to the efforts of the elite of their community to modernise itself. At a much later stage in the history of the national movement, the Congress leadership virtually handed over the leadership of the Muslim masses to the ulemas who had till then been confined to their seminaries and mosques. It was in fact at a conference of the ulema that the decision to launch the Khila-fat agitation and call for noncoopera-

tion' was taken. And then, armedwith their support, Gandhiji put the plan before the Congress. The religious fervour generated by the *ule*mas diverted the revolt of the Moplahs of Malabar into anti-Hindu channels and became the first breach in the national unity forged during the Khilafat and noncooperation days.

in the contract of the contrac

Not only were the ulcmas given the leadership of the Muslims, the idiom in which the message of the national movement was sought to be taken to the countryside and the slogans on which the masses were sought to be mobilised were derived from Hindu mythology and epics. Thus, two conflicting religious ideologies—the Islamic puritanism of the Wahabi Ulemas and the religious revivalism of conservative and reformist Hindu movements-came to colour the emerging national vision. Nationalism was radiated to the people through a religio-political prism.

This was thus bound to aggravate and complicate group conflict and intra-elite rivalry. Nationalism instead of becoming a unitying torce became a divisive factor. The Gandhian formula of the two communities coming together through separate mobilisation—one through the agency of the ulemas and the other through the Hindu idiom of mass communication—could not eliminate the causes of either group conflict or intra-elite rivalry, but instead, it served the same purpose as separate electorate which the Congress opposed.

The Lucknow Pact, however, was an event which showed that the followers of Sir Syed and of the early Congress leaders could have reached a point of convergence in their drive for modernisation of the country if the Congress leadership had not chosen in those early days the short cut of compartmentalising the exclusive interests of the two communities and national interests and of seeking mobilisation of Muslims through the agency of the ulemas and of others

through the Hindu id:om.

It should however not be forgotten that the forward-looking and backward-lagging trends generated by the impact of alien rule were not the only active social agents. There was the third party, the alien ruler, which was all the time manipulating to create divisions in the Indian society to promote colonial political ends. The habits of thinking and behaviour formed as a result of the interplay of these forces have persisted after Independence and the departure of the third party. In the absence of modern mobilisation techniques and with reliance on the short-cuts sanctified by leaders of the past, these habits have become stronger in the democratic system which the Indian people have given to themselves.

Making Muslim Hindus

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad, headed by the former Maharana of Udaipur, has begun a massive nationwide effort to "restore" Indian Muslims to the Hindu fold. It has already achieved some success in Rajasthan by convincing a few thousand Muslims that they are descended from Rajputs, and should take their place as Rajputs in Hindu society. UDAYAN SHARMA was present, during one such conversion.



IT was the night of 22 January. We were at Suhawa village in the Byavai district of Rajasthan, sitting in a primary school It was nearly midnight, but the school of this

remote village was flooded with light. Some 3,000 villagers were sitting patiently in rows. They were Muslims and they were watching a special film being screened on Rana Pratap. It was not a film churned out by the commercial industry of Bombay; it was a very special film, made specifically for the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, to be shown on such occasions (this particular print had been sent by the Agra unit of the Parishad to this village). It was not a short film either; it ran to one-and-a-half hours, Not was this the only such film; there was another one, on Prithviraj Chauhan. And m the intervals during which the reels were changed, one of the organisers of this show would get up and give a lecture thetheme of which was that the Muslims who were sitting there were originally upper caste thakurs who had been forcibly converted to Islam after their forefathers had been tortured by the Muslim invaders. Stories were told about the valour and bravery of the Hindus and cruelty of the Muslim "invaders." And then came the message: Hindu society had recently become affected by iniquities, for which the organisers asked pardon. But today, they were "welcoming the return of the Hindu heroes of old back into Hinduism."

With these words, the 3,000 Muslims gathered there began participating in a havan. Vedic verses were read out, and the tilak was applied on foreheads. All the new converts to Hinduism began shouting, "Rana Pratap ki jai: Samrat Prithviraj Chauhan ki jai." That whole night was spent in havan and keertan. By the time the sun rose on 23 January, the 3,000 Muslims had become Rajput Hindus. The Vishwa Hindu

Parishad, which has begun a massive effort to "reconvert" Muslims into Hindus had won another battle.

But the term that the Parishad uses for this process is not conversion or reconversion; neither is this shuddhikaran (purification). This process is called paravartan, and the name has been chosen with care. The Parishad, which is in the forefront of the resurgent militant Hindu movement, is lobbying hard to get all conversions banned by law, but it does not want to stop the process of bringing Muslims back "home" into Hinduism. Therefore this conversion is not called conversion officially.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad came into the limelight after hundreds of harijans became Muslims in 1981 in Meenakshipuram. The RSS, which has by now become a semi-political

and aggressive organisation counot become an effective vehicle prevent such desertions by the atouchables. But where the RSS at the Hindu Mahasabha failed, a Parishad succeeded. To begin with kept a comparatively low profilts workers did not overtly associatemselves with any political partitle made every effort to win or all the castes of Hindu society. The influence spread across the count and because they were subtle the were more pernicious.

Headed by the former Mahara of Udaipur, the Parishad launche three-point programme af Meenakshipuram: paravartam I du samaj mein sudha (change Hindu society), and put up a num of token harijan priests to carry the message to the untouchables. I

These posters appeared in Rajasthan advocating reconversions. The map of "Hindu" India on the right includes Pakistan, Burma and Sri Lanka



they had one overriding principle: not to allow coverage of their reconversions, so that no controversy would build up. In fact, they feel that the mullahs made a mistake by allowing the Mechakshipuram conversions to be publicised. The Parishad would work quietly

The first incling of what was going on frickled out only late last year when on 9 November a Hindi daily of Rajasthan published an item that in Navagaon mear Masooda 658 Muslim families belonging to the rawat cheeta and kathat cistes had te turned to the Hindi told. About 3,000 such Muslims had declared themselves chauhan Raiputs after the paravartan ceremony on 8 November 1982. This newspaper also claimed that this was the third such function, and till then about 5,000 Muslims had returned to Hindiism.

It was then reported that the Vish

wa Hindu Parishad had reconverted 👀 some rural Muslim families of Jaunpur (Uttar Pradesh) to Hinduism. Most of the workers engaged in this operation were not prepared to talk on this subject. "If our work gets publicity, the Muslim League will violently protest with the result that the government will bow down and ban the Vishwa Hindu Parishad to please it," said one of the semor office bearers of the Parishad. He added, "The key to our success will be silence. We are not took like the maulers of Meenakshipuram who advertised and created trouble for themselves. We only want to work But now the paravartan in Rajasthan has been reported in the press."

The organisation secretary of the Rajasthan Vishwa Hindu Parishad Mr Mohan Joshi, a one time student activist, was in the limelight for quite a few months. He had been instrumental in the conversion to Hinduism of the descendants of the last Samrat of Delhi, Prithviraj Chauhan. They had earlier been Mehrat Muslims. While being converted to Hinduism after the tilak, they took a solemn vow never to go in for sunnat or nikah.

Thakur Raghuvir Singh Bandarwada had presided over this ceremony.
The newly reconverted observed a
jagran on the night of 16 October
1982 at the temple of Baba Randey.
Mr Mohan Joshi had delivered a
lecture on this occasion the central
theme of which was that Hinduism is
great and the world is inclined to
accept Hindu philosophy in the
search for real and lasting peace Mr
Joshi told his audience that their
ancestors were converted to Islam
just to humiliate the thakurs in Rajust to humiliate the thakurs in Rajust han

The sarpanch of Kathipura village,

'The history of Islam and Christianity has been written with swords'

Lala Harmohaniai telis UDAYAN SHARMA



Lala Harmohardal is the general secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad who now looks af ter the Parishad's central office in the capital. He was one of the

main organisers of the "reconversion" camp at By ivar in Rajasthan. When he tast saw me, he was very anger that a newsman, and in paificular me, had managed to breach the ring of secrees that the Parishad had created around this ceremony. His fast reaction was, "I will ask Mohanji (Mohan Joshi) why you were permitted to take photographs here " He was initially not at all prepared to talk about the reconversions, but once he did start talking, he did not stop for two hours. This, in essence, is his explanation of what is happening

"Conversion is when a person originally belonging to our religion changes from his original religion to a new one. When the same person after sometime returns to his original religion, it is paravarran. We oppose conversion not paravarran. It is not that conversions have taken place for the first time in this country. Conversions have taken place earlier also, but we have

never appreciated them. But we never objected to them because even after conversion, convertees remained attached to India and always considered themselves to be Indian citizens. But the Meenakshipuram conversion was brought about by various types of inducements. It was not simply a conversion but a plot to induce antinational feeling. Changing the name of the village and opening an Arabic school directly imply this. As this conversion was brought about with the help of foreign money, the initiators of the Meenakshipuram conversion were outsiders. This was an attempt to disintegrate Hindu society:

"I admit that foreigners are not solely to blame. Hindu society is equally at fault. In the course of time, over thousands of years, differences cropped up in the society because of various reasons. These were encouraged later on by Britishers. A few of our religious pandits initiated the concept of untouchability. The result was that the roots of unch-neech established themselves deep into the society. We were under the impression that the things will change for the better after independence because foreigners had utilised this weakness of our society and had encouraged the same. But unfortunately our society

further split into states, religions and linguistic segments after 1947. With a view to fight and eradicate such evils, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad was established. Its founders were. Dr. K. M. Munshi, Guru Golvalkar, Master Tara Singh, Saint Tukroji, Hanuman Prasad Poddar, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, Swami Chinmayanand, Dwarika, Shringari, Kamakoti Jyotish and the Shankaracharya of Govardhan peeth. Jain Muni Sushil Kumarji, respected Dalai Lama and Mr. M. Apte.

"I find *paravartan* justified because Hindu society has never remained expansionist in character, we neither attempted to occupy any other's territory nor destroyed their culture even when we had expanded ourselves to Africa. Ashoka and Samudragupta went far and wide, but came back to India. Till date, we have never constructed a temple by breaking a church or a masjid. We have never resorted to violence for the cause of religion, whereas the history of Islam and Christianity has been written with swords. In England, even today, no member of the royal family can marry a Roman Catholic. It is my challenge to America to elect a black or a Jew President. We are only bringing back our own people with the aid of paravartan."

Mr Nur Khan, announced that he was returning to the 'Kshatriya vansh' of his ancestors. He renamed himself Narendra Singh. The president of this reconversion ceremony was the retired lieutenant general and president of the Rajasthan Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Mr Umrao Singh. Mr Mohan Joshi read out the names of 1500 Muslims belonging to the cheetah caste who had declared themselves chauhans in Khedi village on 11 September 1981.

Mr Mohan Joshi lives in Jaipur in two rooms at the back of a large villa belonging to Lt Gen Umrao Singh. A great believer in simplicity, he always sleeps on the floor. There is an oil painting of Guru Govind Singh prominently displayed and paintings of Krishna in various moods and in different postures. The room is plastered with posters of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in different languages: Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Oriya, Assamese, English and Gurmukhi. Mr Mohan Joshi was not, however ready to speak on the subject of conversions. Perhaps he believed this would jeopardise the cause of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad.

After the conversions at Meenakshipuram, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad activated all its units throughout the country to emancipate the people of every state. A folder bearing three maps was distributed all over the country. One map showed India during the Mahabharata era, which depicted Kampuchea as Kamboj, Saudi Arabia as Arabestan and Mecca as Mecceswar. The other map was entitled: 'Muslim organisations in India.' In the third map it was alleged that Christians were trying to establish a 'Christianland' in India. This pamphlet was distributed throughout the country.

This "jagaran abhiyan" was carried out in Rajasthan from 27 March to April, 1982. During 1981 and 1982 Lt Gen. Umrao Singh, Mr Mohan Joshi and the former Maharana of Udaipur spread the message over 10,000 Rajasthani villages with the aid of their colleagues. The propaganda of the Vishva Hindu Parishad was on the same lines as the Jamaat-i-Islami.

According to Mr Mohan Joshi, "Wherever Christians and Muslims went, they tried to annihilate the original inhabitants of the land. Today, the original inhabitants and their culture is all but facing extinction. The spread of Islam destroyed several cultures. It did not make use of a proper dialogue or conviction to

attain conversion.

"Christians entered India through trade and commerce, but they did not build either a secular (society) or a state based on the ideas of Jesus Christ. Muslims tortured Indians-Hindus from the (time of the) kingdom of Ghouri to Aurangzeb. Badshah Akbar was the only exception. Hinduism is not a religion, but a

Where Muslims are over 10% of the population

ANDHRA PRADESH: Hyderabad 38.1%, Vijayawada 10%, Guntur 18.2%, Warangal 18.3%, Kurnool 34.4%, Nellore 19.2% and Nizamabad 29.5%. ASSAM: Gauhati 10%.

BIHAR: Patna 14:7%, Jamshedpur 14.2%, Gaya 19.8%, Ranchi 21.9%, Bhagalpur 30.2%, Darbhanga 25%, Muzaffarpur 20.4%, Monghyr 15.6% and Biharsharif 35.8%.

GUJARAT: Ahmedabad 14.6%, Surat 17%, Vadodara 11.9%, Bhavnagar

12.5% and Jamnagar 20.6%. JAMMU and KASHMIR: Srinagar 85.8%.

KERALA: Cochin 8.3%, Trivandrum 10.5%, Calicut 33.3%, Alleppey 16.2% and Quilon 16.1%.

MADHYA PRADESH: Indore 12.4%, Jabalpur 12.5%, Gwalior 8.5%, Bhopal 36.6%, Ujjain 20.4%, Raipur 11.1%, Sagar 10.1%, Ratlam 13.9% and Burhanpur 45.7%.

MAHARASHTRA: Greater Bombay 14-1%; Nagpur 9.2%, Poona 8.9%, Sholapur 18.5%, Amravati 17.2%, Malegaon 67.5%, Akola 22.2%, Aurangabad 35.1%, Dhulia 24.9%, Nanded 36.7%, Ahmadnagar 14.8%, Sangli 14.7 and Jalgaon 14.9%.

MYSORE: Bangalore City Corporation and Trust Board Area 14.8%, Hubli Dharwar 23.6%, Mysore 19.9%, Belgaum 16.4%, Mangalore 10.8%, Gulbar ga 42.2%, Bellary 30.4%, Davanagere 13.2%, Bijapur 33.2% and Shimoga 20.6‰.

ORISSA: Cuttack 11.1%.

RAJASTHAN: Jaipur 18.7%, Jodhpur 18.2%, Kota 16.8%, Bikaner 17.8% and Udaipur 10.9%.

TAMIL NADU: Madras 8.5%, Madurai 7.6%, Coimbatore 10.2%, Vellore 18.7% and Tirunelveli 12.1%.

UTTAR PRADESH: Kanpur 20%, Lucknow 27.7%, Agra 16.40%, Varanasi 25.9°, Allahabad 23.8°, Bareilly 35.8°, Meerut 36.7°, Moradabad 51.2°, Aligarh 33.3%, Gorakhpur 26%, Saharanpur 38.6%, Jhansi 11.4%, Rampur 71.9%, Shahjahanpur 45.4%, Firozabad 40%, Mathura 14.4%, Ghaziabad 10.6%, Muzaffarnagar 29.3% Mirzapur-cum-Vindhyachal 18.7%, Faizabadcum-Ayodhya 20% and Farrukhabad-cum-Fatehgarh 25.7%.

WEST BENGAL: Calcutta 14.2%, Howrah 10.3%, Bhatpara 14.4%, Kamarhati 18.3%, Asansol 24.8%, Garden Reach 60.5% and Burdwan

DELHI: Delhi 7.4% and New Delhi 2.3%.

Source. 1971 census

nationality. Religions are Jainism, Sanatanism, Sikhism and Varishnavism. Ours, that is all these religions, was never opressive. But Islam had always desired total control. The creation of Pakistan was only because of the fact that a large portion of the population was Muslim. Christians distributed not only medicines in the tribal belts, but made

The reconversion ceremony



the tribals not only anti-Indian, but also fanatics. We fear that both these communities are trying to divide the nation in the name of conversion. We do not find any fault with Indian Christians or Muslims. But there are few politically misguided persons. They sow the seeds of division, initiated by foreign powers. "Dulles had thought of a scheme to contain communism. He had toyed with the idea of constructing of a barrier. To attain this end, he used the American Peace Corps and PL 480 to prepare some Indians loyal to that cause. Then Muslim conversion was called for in Rabat in 1969. Again in 1972, such conversions were called for and Tunku Abdul Rehman of Malaysia was made in-charge of South-East Asia. He is still fighting his battle against Buddhism in this area."

Mr Mohan Joshi, asked to comment on how reconversions started in Rajasthan, began to write the word paravartan (re-conversion), for to him conversion of Muslims to Hinduism was the first condition.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad prepared a list of all such converted tribes of Muslims who could be pur suaded to paravartan. There are a number of tribes in Rajasthan who still remember that their ancestors were thakurs. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad organised camps at which they told them that most of their customs and traditions were Hindu and they were descendants of those thakurs and landlords who were forced to become Muslims after being defeated in war. "Initially, when your ancestors opposed (conversion), they were asked to observe sunnat and told that they would be spared. But that was one of the tricks to trap you." In this manner the Vishwa Hindu Parishad identified all such villages in Rajasthan where Muslims were considered to be descendants of Rajputs. The Meo Muslim of Alwar and the Kayamkhanı Muslims of Jhunihunu were believed to have thakur ancestors. Likewise the cheetas of Ajmer were thought to be descendants of Rajputs. The Muslims of the Gadi tribe were told that they had earlier been Meenas and had tought in the army of king Hamır

All these tribes were fed the line that till 1947 they had continued to observe at least 80 per cent of the Hindu customs and traditions, but because of sunnat and nikah fanatic Hindus had refused to acknowledge them as Hindus.

They were told: "Pundits did not visit your houses even though you people, besides observing sunnat and nikah, also observed ganga ki cheri. You celebrated Diwali besides celebrating Id." According to Mr Mohan Joshi, "The Muslims of these tribes are Muslims only for sunnat and nikah." Cheeta, mehrat and kathat Muslims are spread over two tehsils of Pali Jetaran and Raipur and the whole of Ajmer district. They are found in Udaipur as well. The rawat Muslims who are found in the *tehsil* of Bhilwara, consider themselves to be descendants of chauhans.

Now the Vishwa Hindu Parishad turned their attention to the younger generation. Jagran abhiyan fortnight and Prithviraj Chauhan anniversary fortnight committees, were formed and divided into four groups. Small villages were grouped under 25 centres. At each of these centres a film on Prithviraj Chauhan was screened, and processions and community dinners were organised. On some of these occasions, Panna Naresh, and Rajmata Laxmikumari Chudawat also participated. In 1982, the former Maharana of Jodhpur presided over one such occasion. An atmosphere was thus created to show the potential converts that kings and rulers also considered them to be Rajputs. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad's biggest success took place on 11 September 1981 in Kharakedi village, near Pushkar, Ajmer. There, 1500 cheeta Muslims accepted Hinduism.

Their second success was reported on 30 January, 1982 at Tantiawas village, 24 km from Jaipur. There, 80 Muslims from 25 families accepted Hinduism. Then on 11 July 1982, in Ajaypal, Ajaysar, Misiniya, Bhavta, Sendaria villages, 600 persons belonging to 125 cheeta Muslim families declared themselves the descendants of Prithviraj Chauhan and became Hindus. The organisers of this re-conversion were the Chauhan Rajput Sabha and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad.

The largest such re-conversion was held on 7 August, 1982 in Jolpura, 18 km from Byavra. On this occasion, the scene of Ghori's death was screened and re-screened several times. The next day, 3,100 persons belonging to 300 families of Kolpura. Bakhtpur, Bhimgarh, Patan, Shivpura and Karanpura left Islam and accepted Hinduism. During these proceedings, Thakur Onkar Singh (a retired IAS officer), Mr Mansingh Bavara of the Rathod Rajput Sabha and sarpanch Shankarlal and others were present. On 3 October, 1982, about 2400 persons from 400 families in Aimer declared themselves Chauhans. As one office bearer of the Parishad summed up: "We do not re-convert one or two. The advantage of reconverting an entire village is that no tensions are created."

The Virat Hindu Samaj has no political motives

Dr Karan Singh, president of the Virat Hindu Samaj, on the present situation and his place in it.



THE Virat Hindu Samaj is not a communal organisation. It is a federating unit for different Hindu organisations. This, in fact, is a forum to bring together various

factions of the Hindu community irrespective of their class, caste or political leanings. It should at the same time be clarified that the Samaj has neither political motives nor is it against any other religion hence it should not be dragged into the controversy of being communal or not

Till now the Samaj has organised four conventions and the idea was to create an atmosphere of pride amongst the Hindus. As a matter of fact, Hindus had some kind of

jhenp (awkwardness) in calling themselves Hindus. We took this as a challenge. The Hindus should be proud of the fact that they are Hindus. This in no way should be a matter of shame for them. A Muslim prides himself on being a Muslim. A Christian is also proud of being a Christian. Why not a Hindu? If Hindus who constitute 82 per cent of Indian population have no self respect what would happen to the self-respect of the nation. It is more than clear that we are not working to hurt anyone's religious beliefs. Our attempt is to reform the Hindu community by removing the Kuritivan.

As far as paravartan (reconversion) is concerned, the Virat Hindu Samaj has no direct relation to it. A number of other organisations are involved in it but we are not

opposed to it either. Religion is anyone's personal affair, a matter of individual belief. Who chooses to believe which religion is none of my concern. But those who had left our community for one reason or the other are, however, willing to come back, if anyone wants to come back to his original religion on his own volition, he is welcome. The Virat Hindu Samaj welcomes their return.

So far as the Meenakshipuram conversions are concerned, it was not the first time. Though there have been conversions earlier also, the Meenakshipuram case became controversial for being rightly or wrongly linked with Arab money. What added fuel to the fire was a report in a Kuwait newspaper that Harijans are appropriate to be converted into Islam.



Punjab: Delusions of discrimination?

Or, is there basis in the Akali argument? HARPAL SINGH BEDI answers



IN the last few years there has been a great deal of debate over the rise of Sikh communalism. The emergence of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale as a militant

leader, the use of slogans saying Sikhs are a separate nation, the demand for Khalistan, the antismoking agitation, the acts of violence in Punjab, and the hijacking of aircraft, are some of the instances cited to prove that communalism is on the increase among Sikhs. In India, the main cause for the rise of communalism is attributed to social. economic and religious discrimination. Thus the Sikhs have clearly not been discriminated on any of the above grounds. Those who talk, therefore, of Sikh communalism are baffled because, according to them, there are no apparent reasons for it. The Sikhs, they argue, are the most prosperous people in the country. They are well represented in the services. In north India, they virtually control some of the industries and they are socially and religiously well integrated into the mainstream of Indian society. Thus, there seems to be more than meets the eye behind the rise of Sikh communalism.

To go into the genesis of the problem, one has to understand a few basic facts. The first is the Sikh belief that they have not been so far accepted as a separate religion by the Hindus. Sikhism has been called an extension and a more militant form of Hinduism; the implication is that Sikhs are no longer required to return to the original fold (Hinduism). The basic emphasis of the Hindu leadership is that all the Sikh gurus were Hindus till the tenth guru converted them to the Khalsa panth to protect the Hindus from the onslaughts of the Mughals who were "hellbent to convert them to Islam."

In the early Twenties, the Arya Samaj movement was started with the avowed intention of bringing the "Sikh brethren back to the fold" and they did succeed to some extent, but the movement had a backlash and the Singh Sabha movement was started to counter the effects of "Hindu influence over Sikhism." During this time a prominent Sikh leader wrote his famous paper enti-

tled: Hum Hindu Nahin Hain (We are not Hindus) and the divisions between the two communities started coming out into the open. After Independence, the Akalis, due to the shortsighted policies of the Congress, became the sole champions of the Sikh cause in Punjab.

Although the Akalis continued to win a large number of seats in the state elections they realised that on their own they could never hope to capture power in Punjab unless it became the Sikh majority state. So, unwittingly a linguistic demand for the creation of the Punjabi suba, became a communal issue. The more vocal the Akalis' demand for the Punjabi suba became, the more the Punjabi Hindus opposed it with equal vehemence. Matters came to such a pass that in the census, the Punjabi Hindus of the state put their mother tongue as Hindi.

When the Akalis failed to get Punjabi suba, while other states were being created on the basis of language, the Akali Dal started the propaganda that Sikhs were being discriminated against and that the "Hindus were bent on destroying the religion." Delay in the creation of the Punjabi suba was one of the major reasons which fuelled the fires

of communalism among the Sikhs. Till today, most Sikhs in Punjab have not forgotten that the "Punjabi suba was created after lot of sacrifices because it was demanded by the Sikhs." The formation of the suba could not help the Akalis win power. The Akalis were divided into Jat and non-Jat groups. To their chagrin the non-Jat Sikhs formed the solid vote

bank of the Congress.

The increasing influence of the Nirankaris, Radha Swamis and other sects among the Sikhs added to their discomfort. The Sikhs were also saddled with the caste system although their religion was based on the concept of a casteless society. It will be no exaggeration to say that the Akalis played an important role in injecting the caste system in the Sikhs in order to gain votes. The Akalis paid little heed to the growing influence of the Nirankaris. Thus when the Dal started its movement against them, it surprised a lot of people. The Nirankaris allege that the Akalis came to them for help during elections a number of times. The green revolution and growing prosperity in the state added new dimensions to the problem. Large numbers of Sikh youths started discarding long hair and their turbans. It was no longer

Religious leaders Syed Abdulla Bukhari (in dark glasses) and Sant Bhindranwale at the Amritsar Golden Temple





Sikhs demonstrating: demand for a separate Sikh nation.

unusual to see Sikh youths smoking openly. This trend upset the Akali leadership but it was helpless; also, most of the rural people who went abroad gave up the turban. Most were Jats and related to the Akali leadership. Thus it was not surprising to see the relatives and close friends of the defenders of the faith giving up the basic tenets and still being accepted by them. The Akalis were caught in a vicious circle. At home, they called for sacrifice to protect Sikhism but they could not ask their own men to adhere to the

religion.
The orthodox and conservative elements among the Sikhs, irrespective of their party affiliation, were deeply concerned with this trend and anybody who talked of defending the faith with a missionary zeal was welcomed. The advent and subscript of Sont Phindres.

quent popularity of Sant Bhindranwale should be seen in this context. "Sikh communalism," said a veteran historian, "should be viewed in a different context. It is not typical communalism like Hindu versus Muslim or Christian. It is a desper-

ate attempt to save the religion."
The idea behind the cry of 'Sikhs are
a nation' should be seen in this

context, he added.

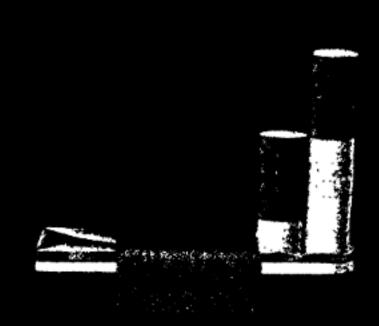
But how long can a religion be sustained on such agitations and by arousing religious fervour. Gurtej Singh Brar, a young IAS officer who has resigned his post and is now an advisor to the Akali Dal said: "A religion can only survive if its people understand its glorious traditions, history and its tenets. We are trying to tell the Sikhs about this. But one should be clear in one's perspective. These Hindus will not let us live in India as Sikhs. They want to destroy us. We are not Hindus and this must be made clear."

When asked what grievances the Sikhs have or whether they were all imaginary, Gurtej Singh said: "No. they are real. One should not go by the data and statistics provided by the government. The Sikhs are being victimised in every sphere of life very subtly." He listed the grievances: Sikhs are still governed by the Hindu Marriage Act, Property Act and are clubbed as part of the Hindu society although they have their own religious code; Punjab is being discriminated against because it is a Sikh-dominated area; Sikhs were treated as aliens and insulted during the Asian Games; the refusal of the government to grant a holy city status to Amritsar while Hardwar and Varanasi are; and the river dispute; Chandigarh is not transfered to Punjab simply because "Sikhs are demanding that L there have been several encounters and many amritdhari (baptised); Sikhs were killed and no inquiry has been held while when one Hindu was killed the centre and the state governments started harassing the Sikhs. The CM Darbara Singh, has placed Hindus in top positions in the state and every Sikh is suspected by the government. Puniab has been deliberately kept industrially backward and now the government also wants to control the gurudwaras. While the Akalis may claim that their movement is not against any other religion they have alienated the Hindus from the Sikhs. The division is clear and, perhaps, permanent. The Sikh grievances, real or imaginary, have led to a movement from which the Akalis may find it difficult to get out. The extremist elements are now very strong in the party and will, in the absence of any programme, be likely to keep up the communal tension in the state. The Hindus, in turn, are not helping to solve the problem. The continuous harping that Sikhs are Hindus has alienated even the most moderate of Sikhs.

The tragedy of Punjab is that the major communities, Hindus and Sikhs, have gone through the trauma of a communal holocaust but they have not learnt any lessons, as a Punjabi journalist_remarked. The Akali attempt to raise the slogan, "The panth is in danger" does not carry any conviction because when they were in power they hardly bothered about these demands. Communalism among Sikhs will grow more rapidly if Hindus do not change their attitude towards them. The recent Hindu convention in Amritsar presided over by Dr Karan Singh has created more problems than solving them. We must realise that one of the most prosperous communities of India is fighting to maintain a different identity. We must try to understand them. But the demands of the Akalis are not as simple as they are being made out to be. The Muslim League also started in the same way before partition.

Cover story continued on Page 36

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Assam: The roots of the violence

In Assam, the RSS, along with elements of what is now the BJP, swung into action after the agitation began. Drawing on the fact that the majority of the suspected foreigners are Muslims, they combined to sow the seeds of fresh discord, reports SEEMA GUHA from Gauhati



ASSAM's politicians and political parties have been successfully cut to size by the Assam agitations in the last three years. But it has not been able to restrict the

growth and expansion of communal organisations like the RSS, the BJP, the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Hind and the Jamaat-e-Islami. The very nature of the Assam movement provides fertile ground for these dangerous communal organisations to take root and breed.

Neither the RSS nor the BJP had any noticeable presence in Assam prior to the agitation though both the organisations had begun taking a

second look at the state ever since the Janata came to power in the 1978 Assembly elections. However, it was only when the movement against alleged foreign nationals began in Assam that elements of what is now the BJP, plus the RSS swung into action. Drawing on in the fact that a majority of the suspected foreigners are Muslim, the RSS-BJP combine attempted to take maximum advantage of this to sow the seeds of communal discord among the people. The RSS chief, Balasaheb Deoras, openly proclaimed that Assam was in danger of being en-gulfed by Muslims and unless "Hindu Raj" was brought about, the entire north-east was doomed to be overrun by Muslim infiltrators. This inflammatory speech harping on the prospects of the Hindus being reduced to a minority in the state echoed the latent fears of many Assamese. The creation of Bangladesh—more so its reversion to an Islamic state—and the growth of Muslim fundamentalism all over the Islamic world have made sections of Hindus in Assam rather apprehensive and easy prey to the BJP-RSS propaganda. While the RSS blatantly fans these fears the BJP is more subtle about it though often it too throws caution to the wind and speaks out explicitly against the Muslims.

That this kind of sentiment appeals to some sections of the people is borne out by the fact that while three years ago the RSS had no organisation worth the name in Assam, today it runs at least 300 regular shakhas all over the state. The RSS has been organising training camps and meetings in the state for the last three years many of which are attended by central leaders like Balasaheb Deoras or other party luminaries like K. H. Sitamar Ayu, K. A. Sudershan, Santa Ram Bhatt. As early as 1981 the RSS had held as many as 27 training camps in the state. The RSS has attempted to spread its activities all over Assam including Cachar and the hill districts. In September last year RSS meetings were organised at Nalbari, Dhubri, Gauhati and Dibrugarh. In all these meetings the RSS leaders stressed the point that the Muslims were the main enemies of the people as they threatened to turn Assam into a Muslim-majority state. From 9-15 October, another high-level RSS delegation led by Mr Deoras himself toured Assam. The people were told to unite as Hindus and forget the differences of language, caste and provinces, if they wished to survive the Muslim enslaught in the region.

However, much more important is the RSS and the BJP presence in the state. The BJP today claims to have a membership of 40,000, of which 2,000 are active members. They also have units in every sub-division of Assam though many of these are not really functional. Unlike in the past when the BJP following in Assam was more or less confined to the Marwari trading community, today

Lamilian scene of destruction: houses plundered during the riots in Assam



its followers include caste Hindu Assamese from urban and semiurban areas. Among the local BJP leaders are prominent citizens ...ke Col. Uma Sharma, ex-chairman of the Assam State Electricity Board and Dr Jogesh Mahanta, for some time principal of the Gauhati Medical College. The party has a sizable following in the Nalbari and Barpeta areas of Kamrup district, Nowgong and Dhing in Nowgong district and in Dhemaji in Lakhimpur, besides nearly all major towns in the state including Silchar, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Gauhati. The BJP claims to have a unit each in 75 of the 126 Assembly constituencies in the state.

The BJP is going all out to woo the Assamese Hindus in the state. In fact, with the Congress(I) losing its former hold on the Assamese the Congress(S) and the Janata disintegrating and the left forces regarded with complete distrust among the majority community, the BJP feels that it could well offer an alternative leadership to fill the vacuum created by the erosion of the Congress(I). Whether it can really offer an alternative remains to be seen. The BJP is leaving no stone unturned to expand its base in Assam. Like the RSS the BJP top brass like Atal Behari Vajpayee, Mr Jarwant Singh,

Sundarsingh Bhandari and Bansilal Soni have become frequent visitors to the state. From September the BJP held more than 36 meetings to popularise its doctrine in important towns and villages in Assam. While supporting the AASU and AAGSP leadership, they have had reservations about the students' insistence that all foreigners irrespective of whether they are Hindu or Muslim must leave Assam. However, after the announcement of the elections the party has toed the AASU, AAGSP line completely in order to gain maximum mileage from its antielection stance. The BJP organised as many as 13 anti-election meetings in January and 12 meetings in February. The purpose of all of them was to organise resistance to the elections and to stop them by force whenever necessary. In fact, during the party meeting held in the BJP office in January, Mr Vajpayee is said to have told his partymen to ensure that the candidates of other parties were stopped from taking part in the elections so that others could not gain any political advantage from the BJP boycott. Mr Vajpayee was assured by the local unit of the party that plans were afoot to see that the elections would be effectively boycotted. However, what those plans were and how far the BJP contributed to the disturbances

in Assam cannot now be ascertained. The speeches of many BJP leaders were highly irresponsible and raised communal tension. Addressing a meeting at Jorhat on 18 February, Mr Vajpayee told an appreciative audience that "bideshis (foreigners)" are ruling the roost in Assam and there were two "bideshis" in the last Anowara Taimur ministry. His reasons: when questioned on this point in Parliament, the then home minister Giani Zail Singh had said, "We will examine the matter." By making baseless accusations and through innuendos and suggestions the BJP leaders tried to vitiate the atmosphere. Mr Vajpayee went on to ask as to what kind of state was Assam when "bideshis" not only became voters but also ministers. He pointed out that in Punjab if any "bideshis" entered, they would be arrested and put in jail within 12 hours or be cut into pieces and thrown in the fields by the villagers. If this sort of speech did not incite anti-Muslim feeling, what else could?

The activities of Hindu communalists have also led to the growth of Muslim communalism in the state. Organisations like the Tablique Jamaat have made use of the religious platform to propagate communal views. While the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Hind had always been more popular in Assam and had more or less acted as a front for the Congress(1), the activities of the more communal Jamaat-e-Islami have increased in the last three years. Muslims have been told that they have always been persecuted and unless they close ranks and act together their future would be jeopardised. The Jamaat-e-Islami has been active in minority pockets in Nowgong and Goalpara as well as among the young, especially, the followers of the All Assam Minority Students Union. Just as the RSS and the BJP have been advocating the boycott of elections, the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Hind have been asking Muslims to go out and vote. In a meeting held in Dibrugarh sometime back the Tablique Jamaat also discussed the prospects of Muslim candidates, especially those having links with the Jamaat, in the election. On 28 and 29 January, the Jamaat held meetings in Rangia and Mukalmua, respectively. It has also been reported that in certain areas in Nowgong, weapons have been collected and stored in mosques at the instigation of the Jamaat-e-Islami.

With an uneasy calm prevailing in Assam right now communal organisations of both the Hindu and Muslim variety are bound to thrive in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion. Unless some kind of check is maintained over the activities of these communal organisations, the already complicated scenario could

get much worse.



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Gujarat:Discontent leads to communal strife

The failure of the political system to deliver the goods often leads to communal violence, reports TUSHAR BHATT



GUJARAT's cities like Baroda, Godhra and Ahmedabad, rank high among the troublespots in communalism which seems to have become an everpresent fact of life

in the urban areas of India's secondmost industrialised state. There is no pattern in the recurring eruption of strife and inevitably, the cause has been innocuous enough. On hindsight, the scene is familiar-rumour feeding upon rumour and eventually culminating into bloody killings, followed by police intervention and then accusations of police excesses. This again is followed by more clashes, normally involving policemen as well. The sequence of the return to normalcy is equally predictable. Curfew, followed by VIP's visits with declarations made about the need to take long-term steps. However, when the fire is doused at one place, all is forgotten till the memory gets a rude jolt with yet another communal incident.

The fact is, that although rioting takes on communal colour, the strife in the various cities emanates more from the frustration, anger and exasperation of the people of the lookout for an excuse. The basic discontent springs from the widening gulf between the aspirations of the people and the failure of the political system to convince these people why things are not as they should have been. It is essentially a socioeconomic strife that takes on communal tinges. Thus, two years ago it was this same feeling that fanned riots over the reservation of seats in medical colleges for the backward

In Baroda, for instance, the violence originated in the gang warfare between bootleggers belonging to Hindus and Muslims and soon escalated into major riots. Last year in December, trouble gripped the central Gujarat city once again when the police commissioner of the city, Jaspal Singh, was transferred by the government. It could be significant however, that thus far, the communal strife in Gujarat was restricted by and large to urban areas and yet there appeared to be an increase in these incidents. This is partly because Gujarat is a heavily urbanised state. According to the 1981 statistics, 31 per cent of Gujarat's people live in cities (the figure was 26 per cent in 1961 and 28 per cent in 1971). Moreover, nearly 58 per cent of the urban population in Gujarat resides in cities with a population of more than a lakh. Another curious demographic feature is that Muslims number about nine per cent of the state's total population; on the other hand, 21 per cent of the population is that of scheduled castes and tribes.

During the past 22 years of Gujarat's existence as a separate state it has climbed from the eighth place on the industrial map of India to the second. With this came a rise in prosperity. Opportunities in industries demand a higher scale of professional skills and education, and the poorer sections among both the Hindus and Muslims missed many opportunities because they did not have the requisite skills. In Baroda, for instance, a host of industries in chemicals and petrochemicals as well as electronics have sprung up over the past 15 years, but Muslims and harijans have been the smallest beneficiaries of this.

The 1980 Lok Sabha elections in Gujarat saw the birth of a theory of KHAM (kshatriya, harijan, adivasis and Muslim) that saw the Congress(I) victoriously through both the Parliamentary and Assembly elections. However, this led to a further raising of aspirations specially among the harijans and Muslims. Although KHAM, as a vote-catching device was a sure-shot strategy, it ignored castes like the patels (who are the farming community) and the banias and brahmins (who form the middle and higher bracket classes, the elite of the urban areas).

Ever since the 1980 elections, there has been an open division between the KHAM and the other communities. It was this chasm that eventually, among other things, led to the birth of the Rashtriya Congress. The Congress(I), having won on the strength of the KHAM, tried to softpedal the issues. It did not want to alienate the patels and others any more, partly at the behest of the Congress(I) high command. The effort, thus, boomeranged on the Gujarat Congress(I): on the one hand the KHAM sections felt annoyed that

Army patrolling the streets of the riot-torn Ahmedabad city



not enough was done for them, while the patels and others had not been won over by post-electoral overtures either. The clashes over the reservation of seats between the caste Hindus and the harijans reflected the frustration of both. Each, therefore, took on an aggressive stance. The stand taken by the harijans then, appears to have taught the Muslims a lesson or two. Several young unemployed Muslims that SUNDAY spoke to, felt that if they did not stand up like the dalits, they would not get a just share.

By a historical coincidence, the Congress(I) leaders in the presentday Gujarat, are almost all from the post-Independence era, because till 1972, Gujarat continued to be the stronghold of the Congress. The 1972 victory of the Congress(I) saw the emergence of second rank leaders

coming to the top. The infighting in the ruling party, ever since, has seen ministries come and go. The result has been that many seasoned workers of the old Congress have either left voluntarily or have been pushed out by younger forces, into a sort of political penumbra. This has left the field open to an extremely poor quality of leadership, and this has, more or less, been the situation in most urban areas where, significantly, the BJP has been improving its stock over the past three years. Many workers have agreed that at many places, rioting that took a serious turn later could have been contained if there had been effective political intervention in the initial stages. But there were no leaders to take such action in Baroda, Ahmedabad or Godhra.

The situation has been further compounded by the inertia of the-

Congress(I). In the face of concerted efforts by the BJP, the Congress(I) lacked cadres and local workers who would live among the people and defuse potentially explosive situations. The vacuum has been so evident that in the wake of the initial rioting, not even chief minister Solanki toured Baroda's violencetorn areas. And finally, groupism within the Congress(I) added fuel to the already smouldering fires of discontent. In Baroda there was patronage of gangs by different local politicians and even the Prime Minister appears to be aware of it. The solution probably lies in an all-round spring-cleaning and inculcating a sense of responsibility among the politicians. Otherwise, the rising aspirations, worsening job situation and poverty will eternally provide handy combustible material for communal troubles.

South: Casteist, rather than communal

The south has remained virtually out of touch with communalism. Instead, what the region has witnessed is rampant casteism with caste groups jockeying for power. In recent times in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, this casteism has led to violence and bloodshed. ANITA PRATAP analyses the reasons for this development



COMMUNALISM, or its twin, casteism, is deeply interwoven in the social fabric of south India. A singular difference is that unlike in parts of the north, the canker of virulent

communalism has not eaten into the vitals of the southern body politic. When the communal instinct of a group of individuals belonging to the same sect is channelised into a powerful, unified force, it invariably spills into the political arena.

In Andhra Pradesh, the brahmins. God's own chosen few, were at the helm of not only religious, but also political, affairs. It was only during Congress rule that political power shifted from the brahmins to the sudras (reddys and kammas). In the internecine war that followed, the reddy community were the victors and the politically vanquished kammas canalised their dynamism and native shrewdness to business and commercial exploits. Thus, while the reddys marched into the political fortress, the kammas gained control of the commercial kingdom of the state. The kammas were also re-

sponsible for instigating the antibrahmin movement in Andhra Pradesh, to counter which the reddys promptly supported the brahmins. Politically, as accessibility to the power centres proved to be difficult owing to reddy domination of the Congress, the kammas supported the communists. This explains why even today, communist strongholds are essentially in the coastal districts

A bathing pool meant for Hindus



where the kamma population is the highest. It is only now with the advent of N. T. Rama Rao, that kammas are tasting political power

for the first time.

While the kamma-reddy fight never resulted in bloodshed, the Hindu-Muslim confrontations in Andhra often have. Unlike the more generalised Muslim League syndrome, the Muslims of Andhra or more precisely Hyderabad, have their own indigenous political party—the Majlis Ittehadul-Muslimeen Party-now headed by Mr Salahuddin Owaisi. The fierceness of communalism is evident from the fact that there are three constituencies in the Old Hyderabad city area which are the impenetrable strongholds of the Mailis Party Charminar, Chandrayangutta and Yakatpura. These Assem-bly seats were wrested from the Congress even when the Congress was at the zenith of its popularity in the Sixties Majlis candidates routed rival Congress candidates who had been ministers in the cabinet, even making them forfeit their deposits. Though intense, the support that the Majlis Party musters is limited to old Hyderabad That their influence is growing is evident from the fact that in the January Assembly polls their

Cover story continued on Page 44



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strength in the Andhra Assembly rose from three to five. As is inevitably the case, the Majlis Party was started as a non-political organisation in 1932, the purpose being mainly to hold the Muslims of the neighbourhood together. In 1962, the organisation that had geared its efforts for the social, economic and educational uplift of the Muslims, went political with the election of Mr Owaisi as an MLA. With the growth of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in urban centres, clashes between these two groups have often erupted leaving bloodshed and death in their wake. The most recent incident was the election violence of 5 January that took a bloody communal turn in Old Hyderabad city.

Atrocities against harijans, as for instance the Padiri Kuppam incident, are more political than com-

munal with the haptess harijans becoming pawns in a cruel game of political vendetta.

Kerala is, perhaps, one of the most segregated states in India. At the very same time, the state exemplifies the virtue of harmony.It is the level of enlightenment in Kerala that has enabled the Malayalis to live together peacefully, despite the presence of disparate communal groups. Despite the fact that almost all communities have evolved their own powerblocks, each of which makes its distinctive presence felt in the political sphere, time and energy have not been frittered away in indulging in fruitless violence against each other. The focus has always been on enlightened selfinterest. By and large, the power balance has been equitably distributed among the various communities. But of late hostility is mounting against the Muslims, who, by canny manoeuvering, have always remained on the winning side

Today, the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) has the maximum bargaining power in the ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) coalition—the continuance or fall of the Karunakaran ministry rests entirely in the hands of IUML. Ensconced in this enviable position, the League has been successful in getting many concessions for its community, provoking a certain amount of envy and animosity among the Hindus and the Christians. For example, when the IUML was in the Left Front (Namboodiripad ministry), they succeeded in getting the formation of Malapuram district; now in Karunakaran's ministry they have achieved their goal of Kasargode district. In fact it is believed that it was in a bid to prune the growing power of the IUML, that the CPI(M) engineered a split in the party in 1974. The breakaway faction, the All India Muslim League, joined the Left Front. The growth of the RSS in Kerala

over the last ten years has been phenomenal. Oddly enough, the growth has resulted in an erosion in the communist ranks. A host of reasons are advanced for this phenomenon of the RSS in Kerala. Apart from the ideological giving way to the communal, another reason often given is that the RSS is not only a cadre-based party, but a militant one which appeals to the youth. Moreover, parents too are more favourably disposed to their progeny joining the ranks of the RSS rather than the

communist parties.

The origin and evolution of various community organisations, such as the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Sangham (SNDP) of the ezhava community, the Nair Service Society of the nairs, the Kerala Congress of the Christians and the Muslim League, is responsible for the highly intricate and delicately balanced communal politics of Kerala. Under the leadership of Shree Narayana Guru, it was the ezhavas who showed the way for other communities to mobilise themselves and climb the social, economic and political ladder. The nairs followed suit and so did the Christians.

The Seventies signalled the end of the Christian domination and the rise of Muslim power. Consequently there has been a slight increase in the incidence of communal riots in Kerala. Traditionally Tellicherry, and parts of Malapuram and Kasargode district (where the Muslim population is high) are vulnerable to communal violence. But now Mattanchery, Alleppey and Trivandrum have found a place on the riot map of Kerala.

If one were to come by road from Kerela to Tamil Nadu, rocky surfaces that flank the route all along display a cryptic message "Jai Guru Dev."

The riot-prone districts

The government has identified communally-sensitive areas in various states and the Union territories. This is the list of districts prone to communal incidents:

Andhra Pradesh

Assam

Bihar

Gujarat

Kerala

Karnataka

Madhya Pradesh

Maharashtra

Orissa Rajasthan

Tamil Nadu

Uttar Pradesh

West Bengal

Delhi

Medak, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Adilabad, Kurnool and Nigonda. Cachar, Kamrup, Goalpara, Darrang and Nowgong.

Patna, Darbhanga, Madhubani, West Champaran, Giridih, Siwan, Bhojpur, Gopalganj, Santhal Pargana, Ranchi, Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Hazaribagh, Purnea, Singhbhum, Sitamarhi, Nalanda, Gaya and East Champaran.

Panchmahals, Surat, Banaskantha, Jamnagar, Sabarkantha, Ahmedabad, Junagardh, Baroda, Kheda and Bharuch.

Mallapuram, Cannanore, Trivandrum and

Trichur. bangalore, Bidar, Gulbarga, Dharwar, Mysore,

South Kanara and Kolar. Ratlam, Jabalpur, Vidisha, Sehore, Ujjain, Senoi, Sagar, Raison, Mandsaur, Shajapur, Raigarh, Chhindwara, Damoh, Rajgarh,

Raigarh, Chhindwara, Damoh, Rajgarh, (Beora), Bhopal, Indore, Khandwa and Khargaon.
Pune City, Ahmednagar, Jalgaon, Akola, Amra-

vati, Buldhana, Greater Bombay, Nasik, Parbhani and Thane.

Cuttack and Balasore.

Jodhpur, Nagaur, Udaipur, Kota, Pali, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Jaipur and Tonk.

Trichy, South Arcot, Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli, North Arcot, Dharamapuri and

Coimbatore.

Saharanpur, Badaun, Pilibhit, Shahjahanpur, Jaunpur, Bijnor, Faizabad, Pratapgarh, Rampur, Banda, Lucknow, Barabanki, Rae Bareilly, Muzaffarnagar, Nainital, Ghaziabad, Sultanpur, Gazipur, Deoria, Gatehpur, Mathura, Sitapur, Moradabad, Agra, Azamgarh, Varanasi, Aligarh, Meerut, Gonda, Kanpur, Allahabad, Bareilly, Basti, Bahraich, Bulandshahar and Gorakhpur.

Calcutta, Murshidabad, 24-Parganas and Nadia. Central Delhi and North Delhi.

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The state governments have been advised to set up special cells for communal intelligence and to make a thorough review of the administrative arrangements for maintenance of law and order including preparation of comprehensive communal riot control scheme and setting up of control

rooms in the areas. The governments have also been advised to be selective in posting officers of all levels in these sensitive areas. Painted in bright saffron, the words manifest the infiltration of the RSS into Tamil Nadu. The RSS has been concentrating its activities in the Kanyakumari district with Nagercoil as its headquarters. Today, Nagercoil and its adjoining areas are the most vulnerable spot in Tamil Nadu vis-a-vis communal riots. Clashes between Hindus and Christians have marred the tranquility of the area on several occasions, the most notorious being the Mandaikady riot last year.

In Tamil Nadu, unlike in most states of the country where confrontation is essentially between two main groups, there is an entire range—Hindus versus Muslims, Hindus versus Christians, caste Hindus (thevars and maravars) versus harijans, harijans versus converted harijans etc. Fortunately so far communal feelings have not escalated into frenzy. One shudders to think of such an eventuality. The Meenakshipuram conversions have made the Hindus sit up and awaken to the realisation of the condemned leaving the Hindu fold. Though not armed with a sharply honed propensity for proselytisation, the Hindu ecclesiasts are making a concerted bid to win

back the converted Hindus. The gana ratham (chariot of knowledge) of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad rolls into villages trying to woo their lost brethren.

Twentieth century Tamil Nadu is characterised by the spectacular anti-brahmin movement. The roots of the Tamil renaissance lay embedded in the nineteenth century and ironically were, to some extent, nourished by Tamil brahmins as the richness of Tamil literature remained an esoteric realm: it was not for the masses but for the initiated few of the brahmin literati. However, the flowering of this renaissance demanded that the non-brahmin, the Dravidian, championed his own culture. The Justice Party and the nonbrahmin movement acted as the catalyst to a new cultural awakening among the Tamil people. The glorious citadels of brahmin power and exclusiveness were rent asunder, as Justice reforms opened universities and the bureaucracy to the nonbrahmin. With the non-brahmin movement came a new sense of Dravidian self-consciousness

The non-brahmin manifesto of 1961 signed by Sir P. Theagaraya

Chettiar is perhaps one of the most important documents in terms of the wide-reaching ramifications it heralded in the state. The Justice Party, sponsored by Dr T. M. Nair and Sir Thegaraya Chettiar, had done more to organise non-brahmins around the Dravidian ideal than any other single agent. E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker coverted the Justice Party into Dravida Kazhagam in 1944 and the movement, which never flagged in tempo despite splits in the organisation, finally catapulted the splinter DMK to power in 1967 dealing the most shattering blow to the Congress, a blow that did not even spare Kamaraj. Once in power the DMK was, however, gradually forced to dilute its anti-brahmin stand with CM Karunanidhi publicly declaring that, "Brahmin interests were safe in the hands of the DMK." The antibrahmin sentiment is strong even today, manifesting itself in almost every walk of life. Time has, however, reduced the sting of the movement though brahmins how feel the need to organise themselves into brahmin associations and ironically clamour to be bracketed as a backward class.

Hyderabad: A legacy of tension



HYDERABAD
has had a long
legacy of communal tension
but only since
1978 has the
problem become
chronic. Ever
since the
Rameeza Bee in-

cident (when a young Muslim woman was raped in a police lockup which led to a resultant attack on the police station) in 1978, there have been communal clashes in the city, in 1979, 1980, 1981 and then again in January 1983. The postelection clashes in January have shown that religious disharmony has polarised the old city area voting patterns into strictly communal lines and the tension has become a game of power play. A little spark sets off a spate of violence, showing that tension underlies daily life in the old city.

The old city areas beyond the Musi river on the southern side are the communally hypersensitive localities though the July 1981 trouble began after an attack on a religious procession in Golconda fort. In that area the minority community forms around 55 per cent of the population residing in the narrow crowded alleys with pockets of Hindus in a few localities. These three Assembly constituencies are considered to be the stronghold of the Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen

(MIM). With the MIM winning the Assembly seats, the only viable alternative projected for the Hindus is the BJP, which continues to work hard to make inroads in the area. Speeches are generally highly inflammatory on both sides increasing the feelings of separateness.

However, the situation is no longer just a law and order problem but has socio-economic and political ramifications. As political leaders strengthen their positions, socio-economic factors aggravate the tension. The minority community residing in the old city belongs to the lower economic class with few avenues open to them except for the lucky few, who manage to get jobs in the Gulf countries. The sudden prosperity of some families who have relatives in the Middle-East further aggravates the situation to some extent because it generates envious reactions. The old city population is almost half the population of Hyderabad but educational, medical and civil facilities have not grown at the same pace as the population,

Unlike other old cities, in Hyderabad old city there are only a few rich Muslim families— most of them left the country in the post-independence days—so that there are few social leaders left. Leadership of the MIM has devolved on the political leaders and the MIM has thus become the champion of the minority commun-

ity. As a reaction the BJP projects itself as the only protector of the rights of the Hindus and as the stage for confrontation is set, it becomes a locale for rabid, fanatic communalism. The communal violence in January was sparked off by a polling day scuffle between the BJP and MIM candidates. The other political parties have almost become irrelevant in the old city. As a police officer said, what is most disturbing is that the youth are becoming more and more fanatical and communal minded.

Most policemen indict the vernacular newspapers for exacerbating the unconfirmed reports of violence. Sources in the city say that another factor is the lack of convictions for communal violence. People's memories are short. Eyewitnesses are afraid of retaliation, false names are implicated, the concerned investigating officer is likely to get transferred. The whole process gets so delayed that the perpetrators generally go scot-free.

But the situation is no longer one that can be handled by the police alone. The development of the old city has to be taken up to improve civic amenities and better the living conditions. Vocational and self-employment schemes have to be located in the old city. Education and a steady income will go a long way to remove suspicions

Subha Singh







LOOKING GLASS

Differences between Maharashtra CM and deputy CM





Adik and CM Patil: undeclared war

The rich sugar belt crisscrossing through Shrirampur district in western Maharashtra is currently witnessing an undeclared trial of strength between chief minister Vasantdada Patil, and deputy chief minister Ramrao Adik. Recently, the Ashok Sahakarı Sakhar Kharkhana in Ashoknagar was taken over by an administrator. The factory was formerly under the control of Mr Govindrao Adik, the deputy chief minister's younger. brother. Following charges of inefficient management and a loss of Rs six crores in ten years, the factory was finally taken over by an administrator this week through a court order which upheld the dismissal of the factory's board by the state government. Mr Bhanudas Murukute, a legislator and a strong supporter of Mr Vasantdada Patil, is busy exposing the younger Adik and has asked all shareholder-farmers of the factory to cooperate with the administrator. Several legislators, ministers and MPs who owe allegiance to Mr Vasantdada Patil, and others who want to see a smooth functioning of the state, are perturbed over the parallel government sought to be run by Mr Ramrao Adik. On the eve of the budget session, Mr Adik reportedly called 17 ministers to his chamber at the mantralaya and while ostensibly briefing them on a more efficient functioning of the ministers during the session, told them that all complaints from legislators should be directed to him and not to Mr Vasantdada Patil.

Gen. Zia's annual gifts to George Fernandes

It might surprise many people to know that Mr George Fernandes and President Zia-ul Haq of Pakistan are good friends or, more accurately perhaps Mr Fernandes is yet another victim of the Pakistani President's famous public relations charm. They met in Pakistan last year and the President has gone out of his way ever since to keep the friendship going. On every Id, for instance, the President sends Mr Fernandes a basket of 'kinnu' oranges along with a friendly greeting. The most recent communication from the President was a telegram sent after his return to Pakistan. It said, "I regret that my preoccupation with the NAM conference prevented me from meeting you. Through this telegram I wish to extend my best wishes for your health and happiness."

Unity moves among regional parties in Kerala

Kerala's regional parties, which had all this while showed fissiparous tendencies, are now moving in the opposite direction. The two factions of the Muslim League, the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) and the All India Muslim League (AIML), have been holding talks for over two months now. While almost all the differences between them have been sorted out, one major problem remains. The talks have snagged on the question of whether the IUML, which is a member of the ruling coalition, should leave the government. Party leaders are, however, perservering and it is still very much on the cards that a united Muslim League will become a reality soon and will be a crucial power block in the state. Not to be left behind, the Kerala Congress (Joseph group) has started flirting with the Janata Party (Gopalan group), The Kerala Congress Mani group) meanwhile is trying to woo the National Democratic Party (NDP) of the nairs. But the NDP chairman, Kidangoor Gopalkrishna Pillai, has been playing hard to get saying, "We would work jointly with the Kerala Congress (Mani group) in the United Democratic Front (UDF) since we have many things in common. But this is not intended to be a prelude to merger nor will it be a pressure group in the

Demand for High Court bench at Rajkot

Advocates in Saurashtra are at loggerheads with the state government over their demand for a bench of the Gujarat High Court at Rajkot. They held a demonstration in Ahmedabad and called for a boycott of court work. The opposition is watching these demands closely and is likely to take up the issue since the Solanki government is procrastinating in the matter saying that this demand is being examined in consultation with the Chief Justice of the state.

CPI(M)'s new three-tier training programme

The CPI(M), which believes in a classless society, has now divided its cadres into three classes: advanced, general and new Party sources say that there was no other way to educate the cadres properly, whose number has now crossed the one lakh mark. The party leadership has decided to have separate training arrangements for the three classes of cadres. The advanced ones will be trained to play important roles in the ever-growing departments of the party, while the two other classes will have to undergo intense training before they are allowed to undertake responsibility. The CPI(M), which opened the floodgates for new members, is now in a quandary about the new recruits, a majority of whom are from the villages. More so because of the party's involvement in panchayat administration. Party sources frankly admit that the new members, who have been inducted from panchayats, are in most cases not familiar with Marxist principles, which often leads to distortions in their dealings with people.

LAW

Maneka Gandhi files petition claiming husband's property

With this the split in the Nehru-Gandhi household is complete

New Delhi: On 17 March, when this correspondent happened to visit the district court of Delhi at Tees Hazari in connection with the investigation of a story, he found Mr Shujaat Ullah Khan, the counsel for Maneka Gandhi's party and for the opposition stalwart, Mr Raj Narain, hovering around the court of the district judge The presence of Mr Khan aroused curiosity. Was something interesting about to happen in the Tees Hazari courts? This correspondent approached the lawyer with this query. And the reply was stunning: "I have come here for the succession certificate case of Master Feroze Varun Gandhi," said Mr Khan. So, the late Sanjay Gandhi's property, which had been a matter for much speculation, had become the subject of a court case.

What is the exact extent of the estate left behind by Mr Sanjay

Gandhi? Since his death in an aircrash on 23 June 1980, a lot of speculation has taken place. Although even now the details of his estate are difficult to ascertain, in the petition which Mr Khan has filed on behalf of Mrs Maneka Gandhi and her son, it has been stated that the value for the purpose of court fee is Rs 4,73,058. This, apparently, is only a portion of the estate left behind by him. From the determinate amount mentioned in the petition, it seems the estate being sought is some movable property, either a bank deposit or some company shares. Although Mr Khan refused to disclose the details of the petition, as he did not have Mrs Maneka Gandhi's permission to do so, Mr Khan hinted that the amount involved was substantial. "The matter is so important and involves so much fortune that I have been directed by my client to handle

Apparently, the present petition is a test case. In case the court declares that Mrs Maneka Gandhi and her son, Feroze Varun Gandhi, are the only people who are the heirs of Sanjay Gandhi, then on the basis of the succession certificate issued in the present case, Mrs Maneka Gandhi will move for the acquisition of the other assets of her deceased bushand.

The petition, filed under Section 278 of the Indian Succession Act of 1925, is no ordinary application for the grant of letter of administration of the estate of the late Sanjay Gandhi. The petition states that Sanjay Gandhi had died without leaving any last will and testament. It states, "The petitioners are the only persons entitled to claim interest in or are interested in administration of the estate of the deceased." Under the laws of succession, both as enumerated in the Indian Succession Act, under which the petition has been filed, and under the Hindu Succession Act of 1956, as Sanjay Gandhi had died intestate, the heirs to his estate have to be his widow, his son and his mother. Whether Mrs Indira Gandhi is interested in these assets or not is a different matter. But in law, she is entitled to a share. To this extent, the petition filed by Mrs Maneka Gandhi on her own behalf and on behalf of her minor son, may be a subject of dispute.

Mrs Mankea Gandhi left the Nehru-Gandhi household, at 1 Safdarjang Road, the official residence of the Prime Minister, on 29 March last year, thus bringing the family feud into the open. Since Sanjay Gandhi's death, Maneka Gandhi did not get along with her in-laws and the tensions continued to increase when, following her open defiance by addressing a meeting of the San-jay Gandhi Vichar Manch in Lucknow on 28 March 1982, Maneka Gandhi was asked to leave the house. With the filing of this petition, the family feud, which had so far been the centre of political gossip, and which had generated some gutter politics, steeped in mudslinging by proxy, now has the chances of becoming the subject of an interesting court case.

Maneka Gandhi and Feroze Varun: rightful heirs?



To begin with, by seeking the uccession certificate under the Indin Succession Act, Mrs Maneka Ganlhi has shown that at the time of his eath, her husband was not a Hindu. he estate of a dead Hindu is divided ccording to the provisions of the lindu Succession Act. The Indian uccession Act does not apply to lindus. Sanjay Gandhi was the son f a Parsi father and a Hindu mother. lowever, before their marriage, Mr eroze Gandhi had undergone the huddhikaran ceremony ome a Hindu. His last rites too had ben performed according to Hindu adition. In the case of Sanjay Ganhi too, the last rites were not Parsi ut Hindu. Therefore, one point hich can emerge is whether the etition should at all be under the dian Succession Act.

If the succession be allowed under e Indian Succession Act, as sought Mrs Maneka Gandhi, then Sanjay andhi will have to be treated as a ale Parsi who died intestate and e provisions of Section 51(2) of the dian Succession Act would apply. Inder its provisions, the heirs of njay Gandhi's estate would be Mrs aneka Gandhi and Feroze Varun

Gendhi. Mrs Indira Gandhi will also be entitled for a share, although it will be one-fourth of the share of the widow and the son. In case this succession were to be treated as being under Hindu law, then Section 8 of the Hindu Succession Act would apply. Under this Section too, Mrs Maneka Gandhi, Feroze Varun Gandhi and Mrs Indira Gandhi are heirs to Sanjay Gandhi's estate as he had died intestate. Either way, Mrs Indira Gandhi has a legal interest in the estate of her deceased son.

Why has Mrs Maneka Gandhi chosen this time to file the petition? According to this correspondent's information, the petition was drafted soon after she quit the household last year. The filing of the petition, therefore, may mean that the split in the Nehru-Gandhi household is now complete. When the exact extent of Sanjay Gandhi's estate becomes known, it may turn out to be a colossal sum. The source of his income will also become known. Although details of the property in dispute at present are not available, according to some sources, shares in blue chip companies are involved. Shubhabrata Bhattacharya

ARNATAKA

lleged rape victim is rought to Assembly

ngalore: Sudha, a 20-year-old, deire girl with large eyes, created tory in the annals of the Legislae on Monday, 14 March when she brought into the hall of the mataka Assembly by the Karnata-Kranti Ranga leader, Mr S. Banappa's lieutenant, Mr G. Narayan

he gul was a rape victim. Two s prior to her historic entry into Assembly, she had been raped by persons in broad daylight at the led Lalbagh Gardens, less than a vards from the house, where Mrs ra Gandhi had split her party in 9. Sudha, who was from Ananthain Andhra Pradesh, lived with brother and sister-in-law in an rovised slum on the Bangloreore highway on the outskirts of city. She worked in a smallscale making cardboard boxes, about km away from her house on the gal Hanumanthaiah road.

the fateful Friday, 11 March, ha left the factory after half a work around 1-30 pm intending some shopping with her friend, phine, who used to work in a abouring unit. Sudha had, on day, about Rs 200 with which loped to buy a couple of sarees laily wear. As the girls were ing towards the bus-stop, oppo-

site the office of the Bangalore transport service, an autorickshaw suddenly stopped by their side and one of the passengers put out his hand and caught Josephine by the arm. Sudha protested at this and she herself was dragged into the autorickshaw in which three persons were already sitting. One of them

Sudha victimised?



carried a chopper. Both the girls shouted but nobody came to their rescue. Josephine panicked and escaped into a bus bound for her uncle's place. The rickshaw driver was forced to drive the vehicle into Lalbagh Gardens, where the entry of vehicles is prohibited. The autodriver was then asked to stop near a bush adjoining the wall and a pump house. The man asked him to go away and warned of dire consequences if he opened his mouth. And there, despite her protests, two of the men raped Sudha. They took away her purse and jumped over the wall. The third one was given a bottle to be used as a weapon in case the girl protested too much.

Meanwhile, the auto-driver had gone to the nearest police station and brought along three constables. When they arrived on the scene, the third person, who was also going to rape Sudha, was caught and taken to the police station around 2.30 pm. An FIR was filed. There, Sudha was subjected to the harrowing experience of recounting the incident over and over again to about half-a-dozen police officials, a dozen journalists and scores of legislators. She was sent to the hospital by the police, where she was allegedly mistreated by the lady doctor. On Saturday morning, the police went to her house and recorded her statement. By that time they had arrested another of the accused. The third one continues to elude the police. On Monday, even as the question hour was on in the Assembly, the Kranti Ranga legislator, Mr Narayan Kumar, dramatised the whole issue by forcing the entry of Sudha into the Assembly. In the bargain, he had slapped a member of the ward and watch staff. The whole Assembly was aghast at this behaviour and Mr Narayan Kumar was duly admonished and forced to apologise to the House.

Later, Mr Bangarappa virtually functioned as the leader of opposition in seeking to raise the issue in the form of an adjournment. Even in his preliminary remarks, he sprayed venom on chief minister Ramakrishna Hegde, who holds the home portfolio. The government should hang its head in shame, if such a thing could happen in the capital of the state, he said. The leader of opposition (Congress-I), Mr M. Veerappa Moily, was mild in comparison. He wanted the government to take stern action. Mr Hegde was not in the House and a special debate was announced for the following day.

On Tuesday it was Mr Bangarappa who initiated the debate and repeated his attack on the failure of the government to maintain law and order. Again, for the second day, Mr Molly was content to play second fiddle to Mr Bangarappa and that suited the latter's political purpose. Mr Hegde did not read out the police

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Because, he said, he was not convinced about certain aspects of the incident. He promised a full investigation and stern action against the guilty.

While Sudha has been virtually turned out of her brother's house, quite a few persons have started doubting the veracity of her story. Some of the doubts raised are, firstly, why did Josephine, who was accompanying her until she was dragged into an autorickshaw, not

In fact, she spoke to the police only when they came to her house the following day. Secondly, the incident was supposed to have taken place at 1.30 in the afternoon. The police station is less than a five-minute auto-rickshaw ride from the place where the incident occurred or alternatively, if one jumps the wall it is less than two minutes walk. But the police arrived on the scene an hour later. Thirdly, there were no marks of violence on the body of the victim.

The preliminary medical report confirms this.

The incident, ghastly and gruesome if true, has been highly politicised. Mr Narayan Kumar has strirred a hornet's nest by publicly pointing out that one of the alleged rapists, now in police custody, is related to a Congress(I) functionary in a city. Will the truth come out or will it be shrouded in the political smokescreen?

Our Correspondent

A council of southern CMs is formed







Hegde, MGR and NTR: redefining centre-state relationship

Bangalore: In an unprecedented move here on 20 March, four chief ministers of southern states, took the significant decision of forming a council to discuss matters of mutual concern and try and find solutions. This decision was then announced at a press conference by the four ministers-Mr Ramakrishna Hegde of Karnataka, Mr M.G. Ramachandran of Tamil Nadu, Mr N.T. Rama Rao of Andhra Pradesh and Mr D. Ramachandran of Pondicherry. The meeting, initiated by Mr Ramakrishna Hegde, was only the beginning and the CMs hope that this will encourage others to join the council. Said MGR, "Only when all the chief ministers participate in the council will our aim be fulfilled." Although common problems were discussed ar the meeting, one of the major issues taken up concerned a memorandum that will be submitted to the eighth Finance Commission. The conference, also ttended by the finance ministers of he four CMs, recommended to the entre that a fiscal commission be set p to suggest amendments to the onstitution and to some Acts so that a more equitable distribution of re-

sources between the centre and the states" can be brought about Mooted by Karnataka CM Ramakrishna Hegde, the meeting demanded changes in the Constitution so that is could "give full play to the new definition of the centre-state relationship and the relationship between the states." The main demand of the CMs was very clear when they said at the press conference that they wanted "the bulk of the financial resources to be transferred to the states on a statutory basis rather than on a 0.5cretionary basis" and that "the criteria of distribution of discretionary resources too should be decided upon by the council of chief minis-

in a bid to stall any 'misunderstandings,' the chief ministers made it very
clear that the formation of the council
was in no way directed against the
centre and nor would it affect the
relationship of the southern states
with the centre. "On the contrary, our
decisions would strengthen ties with
the centre," they said. Yet, all said
and done, it had turned out to be a
council of non-Congress(1) chief

ministers. Mr K. Karunakaran, chief minister of Kerala, was conspicuous by his absence, but even this was explained away by Mr Hegde. The Karnataka chief minister said that Mr Karunakaran could not come to the council's meeting borage the state legislature was in session there, and in any case a copy of the proceedings of the conference would be sent to him.

The other three chief ministers oralised Mr Panakrishna Hegde for convening the meening and MGR in an ebullient mood even declared, "! feel jealous of the people of Karnataka for having such an efficient and emment chief minister today!" When questioned whether the Congress(1) chief ministers too were expected to join cae council, Mr Hagde en biguously said: "Maybe.' MCR was a little more expansive when he stated, "Today our strength may be four. It may be 20 tomorrow and that might increase to include the chief ministers of the entire country." It will be interesting to see the centre's reaction to these developments now.

A Special Correspondent

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Several cases exposed in Maharashtra

Bombay: In the recent publicity material brought out by the government of Maharashtra on the 20-point programme, point number six on bonded labour reads: "Though existence of overt bonded labour is almost negligible in Maharashtra, four cases in Thane and one in Ratnagiri were indentified and these persons were released. While collectors have been advised to take immediate steps for their rehabilitation, district magistrates and other authorised executive magistrates have been given judicial powers of summary trial of offences under the

Two years ago in 1981, the government, in its brochure The Budget and the 20-Point Programme had said, "The existence of overt bonded labour has not been identified in the state. No prosecution has yet been launched under the aforesaid Act. Whatever individual reports, complaints regarding bonded labour have been received, the investigation thereof through the commissioner of labour/district magistrates has indicated that they are not cases of bonded labour—the National Labour Institute, New Delhi has been requested to undertake a detailed survev of the tribal areas of the state to assess the exact position about the existence of the bonded labour system and their report is still awaited." It is obvious from this that the state government does not want to recognise the existence of bonded labour which would mean having to accept the responsibility of rehabilitating them. The fact is, that bonded labour is rampant in Maharashtra and more so on the outskirts of Bombay An organisation called "Vidhsak Sansad" (constructive Parliament) has recently freed 15 bonded labourers in the eastern part of Bassein taluka and according to Vivek and Vidyulata Pandit who manage the Sansad, there are hundreds of such cases in Bassein district alone. They are now in the process of identifying them and will shortly start the struggle to free them. This will be an uphill task because most of the landlords who lown' them are Congress(I) bigwigs and police patils. These people get their protection from Mr Bhausaheb Vartak, a former minister and now chairman of the State Industrial Corporation Of Maharashtra (SICOM), and Mrs Tarabai Vartak, both of whom weil to lot of influence in Bassein.

The eastern part of Bassein is primarily forest area and consists of three gram panchayats—Cardi, Kan-

er and Dhaisar. In a population of about 12,000 people, almost 80 per cent are tribals. When Vivek Pandit and his wife first went to this area to set up a goat and piggery project they noticed bonded labourers with agriculturalists. Eight of the bonded labourers that 'SUNDAY' met recentlv. said that they had been brought up to believe that the landlord was god. Most of them had, at the time of weddings in the family, taken a maximum of three saris, three blouse pieces, a *pyjama* and *kurta*, 75 kg of rice some cooking condiments and money for a mangalsutra-all this costing a maxinum of Rs 500. The landlords, however, claimed that they had given Rs 1,000. And for this, the people were made slaves.

These eight persons had been bonded labourers for periods between one and a half to 30 years. During the year, the bonded labour ers received from the landlord 625 kg of rice, one gongri (a rough shawl) and two langotis (loin-cloth) as wages. They worked from three am—carrying soil to the brick-makers by bullock carts—till after sunset.

On 12 May 1982 the Pandits lodged a complaint before the assistant tehsildar who refused to take the complaint. Then on 15 May the landlords, Raghunath Ramachandra Patil, Waman Keshav Patil, and Esubhai Dhondu Patil, attacked the Sansad activists. Thereafter, the executive magistrate, Suresh Karande, allowed Vivek Pandit to plead the case of bonded labourers. The landlords tried their best to stall the case saying that Vivek Pandit was not a lawyer and so could not appear on behalf of the labourers. Punishment provided for, under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, gives three years imprisonment and a fine of Rs 2000. In this case, the executive magistrate had said that he had not yet received powers under Section 21. So the Sansad sent their complaints to the then chief minister who forwarded them to the labour department, which Vivek Pandit said was "an illegal act." He added, "Bonded labour cases should have gone to the collector. It is the

The CM bags acting award

Secunderabad: It was almost a twolakh-strong audience that had assembled at the sprawling Parade Ground on 14 March, to watch their hero receive the best actor award for 1982, at the Sitara film award function. This was an award function with a difference for, the recipient of the best actor award was none other than the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, N.T. Rama Rao himself. Sitara is one of the largest circulated Telugu film magazines, brought out by the Eenadu group of publications, and its function had drawn film personalities not iust from Andhra but from Bombay as well.

Dressed in a grey suit with an open collared shirt (he had discarded his usual political attire for the function),

NTR . no acting in politics



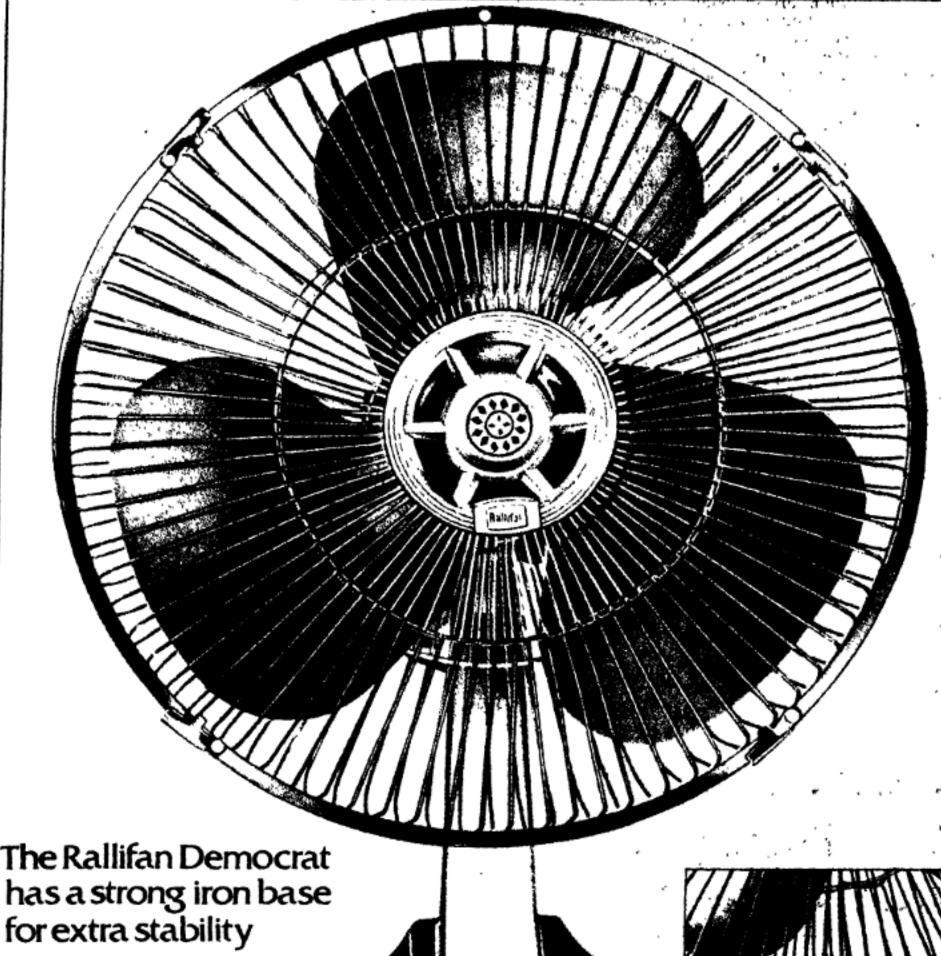
a beaming and debonair NTR went up to get his award from veteran producer, L. V. Prasad, as the crowd cheered lustily. The role for which he bagged the award, was from a film called Justice Chowdhary which had been released in the middle of last year. around the time that NTR had formed his Telugu Desam. NTR has a double role in the film: he plays the title role of Justice Chowdhary, whose son (also played by NTR) is accused on a false charge and comes up for trial in his father's court. Justice Chowdhary convicts his son on circumstantial evidence but like all other happyending films, the truth is ultimately revealed and father and son hunt out the villain to clear the son's name.

Addressing his fans after receiving the award, NTR called upon the Telugu film industry to shift its activities from Madras to Hyderabad so that the city could become one of the film industry's greatest centres. The chief minister also took this opportunity for vehemently denying a remark made by a former speaker who had said that NTR was using his acting talents in politics too. He was certainly not acting in politics, the CM declared, adding that whatever he did in his political life was absolutely genuine.

As at all, his functions, NTR was a terrific draw here too. A massive deployment of policemen (including 16 platoons of armed police) and volunteers made all efforts keeping a restless crowd in check and stopping them from thronging towards the dais to see their hero from closer quarters.

Shubba Singh

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duty of the executive magistrate to find bonded labourers in the territory under his jurisdiction. The tehsildar should have sent our combination is a cognisable offence. But since all of them are in league with each other, although we sent the notice to the police nothing was done to the offenders for five months. On the contrary, when one of the labourers wanted to leave under our protection, the landlord demanded a sum of Rs 500 from him and the labourer who later joined the Sansad bought his freedom for Rs 200."

The Sansad has demanded compensation for the eight bonded labourers which amounted to Rs 70,000 but the landlords being hard bargainers agreed to settle for Rs 24,000. Even this money was given after all the agricultural labourers in the area went on a 14-day strike in support of the bonded labourers' demands. The main demand of the Sansad is that the landlords should be tried for offences under the Bonded Labour Act. But they are being shielded by the Vartaks. Mrs Tarabai Vartak, according to the Pandits, has been supporting Waman Keshav Patil of the Congress(I) who is also the village patil of Dhaisar. He and others, she said, should be tried under the Debt Relief Offences or Minimum Wages Act but not the Bonded Labour Act which would send the landlords to prison.

The freeing of eight labourers has been a major victory because it was done amidst harassment and tremendous pressure from the landlords and police. Now these labourers have joined other activists of the Sansad and formed 'Shramajivi Sanghatana' which is a registered



Some of the freed bonded labourers

trade union body. They have gone to other villages and in Kaner, have already found 26 bonded labourers. They have already prevailed on some of them to leave.

Interestingly, not one of the bonded labourers that SUNDAY met had either heard of the 20-point programme or the Bonded Labour Act. They were not even aware of who the chief minister of Maharashtra was, and whether there had been a change!

Olga Tellis

MANIPUR

The PLA gets active once again

Imphal: An atmosphere of subdued fear continues in this city in spite of a temporary lull in largescale insurgency since February 1982. Though the city now basks under an apparent calm, with troops not much in evidence and shops open even after sunset, news of an ambush here and an encounter there is enough to send people scurrying back to their homes. The new year began with an attack by the rebels on a police Turel. It was at Lilong unit soon followed by daring grenade attacks on two police stations in the city. The apprehension that another bloody spell of violence is slowly unfolding further crystallised following the revelation that about 50 guerillas of the state's outlawed

Maoist organisation, People's Liberation Army (PLA), has undertaken a "long march" to China. This long march was the subject of much discussion in Imphal in the third week of February. Said a Congress(I) leader: "We faced organised rebellion for the first time after 20 PLA hardcores returned to the valley in April 1978 after a two-year training in Lhasa. Will the gang of 50 indulge in the same thing after they come back?" SUNDAY has learnt that the PLA "long marchers" were seen in the third week of February in Kachin woodlands in northern Burma. The gang, which is believed to have started from Manipur in December, includes a few Meetei girls.

Three PLA members, arrested

here in mid-January, first broke the news of their organisation's China mission. The authorities did not then give much credence to this, perhaps dismissing it as yet another piece of "disinformation," used sometimes with telling effect by the wily guerillas. But reports about the movements of some PLA members in the adjoining Burmese areas soon started to trickle out. An encounter between the Burmese Nagas and PLA in the Kachin area in early February confirmed the fact that attempts were made by Meetei desperadoes to forge their way ahead to Yunun in China. Apart from collecting arms, the need to reinforce the six-year-old PLA's fading mystique is another reason for this China mission. The intelligence sources feel that 32-year-old Temba Singh, who took over as the new chairman of the PLA in June last year and then helped to curb the growing factional rivalries in the organisation, wants to do something adventurous to strengthen his position as well as recruit members.

Temba, alias Suren Achouba Sing's life is a saga of fluctuating fortunes. A resident of Thongshu village near Imphal, he joined the PLA founder-chairman, N. Biseshwar, along with 18 others, in the crucial journey to Lhasa in April 1976. He played a key role in the urban guerilla warfare waged in the valley district during '78-'79 but was soon forced to leave the organisation

In 1980, the army, inducted into Manipur to combat the elusive insurgents. managed to arrest Biseshwar and kill seven of his Lhasa-trained associates. This was followed by the liquidation of Kunjabihari, Biseshwar's successor. Kunjabihari's death led to a leadership crisis in the organisation, with the new chairman. Manikanta, facing opposition from gangs, Temba, using this opportunity of factionalism in the organisation, appeared from exile and wrested power from an insecure Manikanta.

That Temba has shot the muchneeded adrenalin to make the PLA once again a dreaded unit was clear, when the rebel body spurned the limited amnesty offer made in mid-December by the state government. The government wanted the rebels to hibernate in a peace camp before availing themselves of the generous rehabilitation grants. Though the CM and the Governor are claiming that insurgency in the state is now on the wane, their private conversations as well as their actions, reveal uneasiness. The CM has installed at his sprawling official bungalow a metal detector to scan the visitors. The Governor moves around in a convoy of at least a dozen vehicles, crammed with gun-toting paramilitary jawans. Peace is still a distant dream in Manipur.

Santanu Ghosh

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oes god's money elong to the people?

erabad: The Andhra Pradesh Court has issued a stay order, wing an application by two dees of Lord Venkateswara, resing the Tirumala Tirupati Dehanam (TTD) and the executive er from depositing any surplus sthanam funds in the governtreasury. The controversy reing the funds of this richest le in the country erupted in uary this year when the governamended the Tirumala Deanam Act of 1967 by an extraory gazette so that the surplus. y could be deposited in any rnment treasury. Earlier it be deposited only in "any bank easury." After the amendment, inance secretary had directed TD executive officer to deposit surplus funds amounting to a ping Rs 46 crores in the governtreasury and had assured the rate of interest and also comtion for the loss of interest due emature withdrawal of fixed sits from various banks.

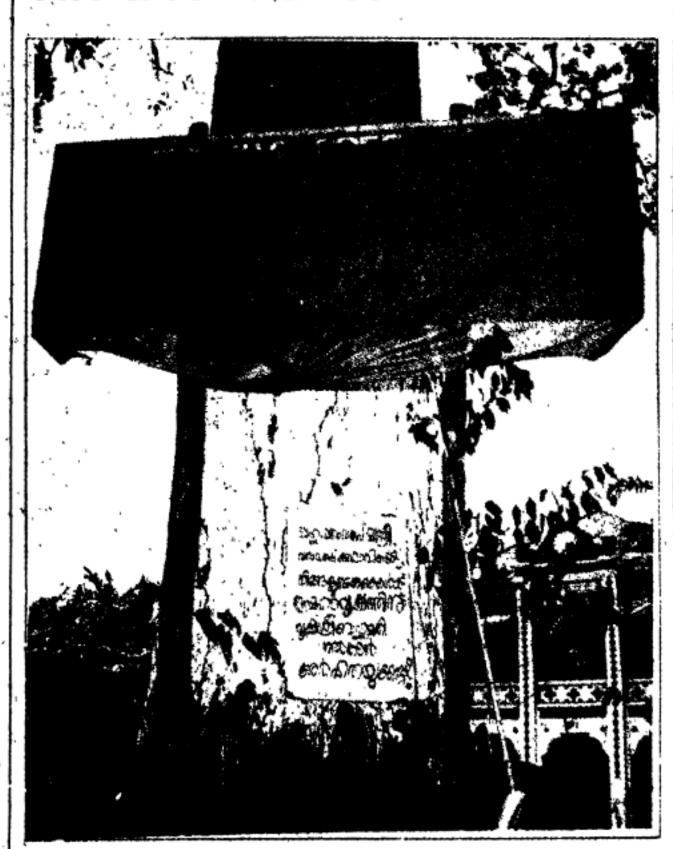
TTD associations and the mancommittee had vehemently ed the government directive. wo days before the board of es was to meet, three Telugu n legislators were planted in pard and the chief minister N.T. Rao, gave a statement saying s a devotee of Lord Venkateshe was sure that the lord would pject to the Devasthanam funds used for feeding starving chiland for providing drinking wahe board of trustees duly comwith the government directive. two devotees—a 36-year-old lturist, Vidyasagar Rao and a r-old vedic scholar, Keshav hastri, vice president of the Anusudhan Parishad—thought vise. Apart from the various and religious points in their n challenging the validity of vernment order, the petitionimed that the fund could not med surplus as it was intended nsion and provident fund of ployees and that the state has thority to lay its hands on belonging to a particular reli-

Justice P. Kondandaramayya judgement suspending the ment order observed that if vernment order was allowed to it would make the TTD a ment department; that the ons raised in the writ petition ger dimensions and the funds be accrued were not suffi-

cient for the propagation of Vedantas, promotion of Sanskrit and renovation of temples apart from charitable purposes as said in the Act. The state government is moving the court for vacating the stay order and this case is being seen as a trend-setter, for other governments can also proceed accordingly. As the petitioner, Mr Shastri told Sunday, "Baiaji (Lord Venkateswara) belongs to everyone and these funds are meant for religious activities and not to pay for ministers' petrol charges. This is an attempt by the government to control religious institutions and we will fight it."

Shubha Singh

The tree of trees



This gigantic, century-old tree (polular ly known as Thenmauu) in the campus of the University College, Trivandrum, which has inspired many a Malayalam poet including Kumaranasan, was conferred the title of Vrikshashree by the Students' Forestry club. However, the state forest minister, K. Nuruddin, who was to preside over the function was not permitted to enter the campus by students protesting against the govern ment's decision to cut down 60 hectares of trees in the Agali forest in Palghat district, northern Kerala. The title was conferred by the vice chancellor of the Kerala university, K. Gopaian in the presence of noted professors and wri ters like Kamala Das and Prof Sugathakumari who even composed a poem on the tree which is an imposing landmark in the city.

NEWS: INTERNATIONAL

PAKISTAN

Women protest against the chaddal

On 12 February this year, the Tehrik Women, Punjab (Pakistan) bravely came out onto the streets of Lahore in a procession to revolt against the forced use of the chaddar (to cover their heads). At the city's Regal Chowk, the police (most of whom were work constables), beat the unarmed women protestors. These photographs taken when the incident occurred, bear testimony to the repressive measures against Pakistani women











THE WORLD

Andropov wants shops open at night



Andropov: insistent

The new Soviet leader, Yuri Andropov, bears the

keeping shops open till late in the night. Most people shop during the daytime because that's the time they can get what they want: the best stocks. But in doing so, they are avoiding their duries. Only a few indulge in late-night shopping, since merchandise doesn't last that long. Some shops and stores are open till 1 pm. For Andropov, more and more hard work could rescue the stagnating economy. So he hit upon a new scheme, "Operation Trawl," where the police conduct daytime raids on stores, bars, movie theatres and even public baths in search of people evading work. But such a scheme has turned out to be an exercise in futility, since nobody pays any attention to government rules which are usually lax. The only places that are full fill late in the night are the bars.

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33 A Baltara Product

Thou shalt not kill—even cats

Recently, a retired French Canadian priest, Rev. Victorien Theoret, who had killed five stray cats in 1980, was acquitted of the murder. The five cats were hiding in his house. When he rang up the sanitation authorities and asked them to remove them since he had to return to Montreal they didn't

heed his call. He then ki the cats, since they we starve or be exposed to dogs in the area. He however declared that would never do it ag since "cats are like sac animals like cows in Indi Rev. Theoret spends e winter in Miami and retu to Montreal.

Moscow, Washington and two peasants

A private theological dispute between two Russian peasant cousins is irritating both Washington and Moscow. Pyotr Vashchenko, 56, a Christian pentecost had gatecrashed into the US embassy in Moscow in 1978 and requested asylum. His cousin Grigory Vashchenko had been allowed to emigrate to West Germany last vear. The US embassy offi-

cials felt that if Pyotr col get an invitation from cousin Grigory a face savi formula could be evolve But Grigory, in spite of re ated requests has refused send an invitation to cousing unless he denound pentocostal beliefs. T pentecost Pyotr and family has been living in t US embassy basement five years.

House for blacks in 'white area'

For the first time in decades, blacks in South African cities will be entitled to own flats in what might be called the "white man's area." In Soweto, for instance, 60,000 of the 11,000 houses will be made available for purchase at 40 per cent discount. This campaign is the most dramatic step the racial authorities have taken to relinguish the

states monopoly control black housing and to foster private market in real esta for blacks. However, should be noted that on "select" blacks will be take in to occupy the house which form segregate townships. Most white at thorities created a series segregated townships a part of their apartheid proramme.

Are the Russians just mmitatol2:

US defence analysts believe that Russia is not militarily superior to them as "they are always catching up to us." President Reagan had recently said that the Soviets were ahead of them in the arms race. Pentagon's new book, Soviet Military Power says that Moscow's prodigious military design bureau and production centres are just "imitators." Russian plans for most of their weapons are based on

US produced weapons. Las year the chief of staff of the Russian armed forces, Mar shal Nikolai V. Ogarkov had said that US weapons repre sented the greatest break throughs. Russia's latest Inter-Continental Ballistis Missile (ICBM) and sub! marine-launched missild failed in its first trial last year. The latest Russian anti-ballistic missile looks like a US missile built a decade ago.

ETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

Sometimes Navin Nischol himself wonders what happened to him. "I think there is something called fate that decides the fortune of men. I firmly believe in that. It not a things would not have happened to me the way they have," Navin says in his more solemn and sombre moments. At times he looks back and tinds "that things could have been better but I really don't know what went wrong where and when I took those first wrong steps." A time came when Navin tried to put things straight when he started his own film. Jaan Sc Pvaara It was to be directed by his brother. Pravin Nischol and was started with Rekha and Reena Roy Naym had a double role in the film and Rekha and Reena tried their best to help an old colleague but nothing seems to have happened

Remember Mehmood? He was not only "the king among comedians" once but also the highest-paid comedian There were times when he was better paid than the film's leading stars. But then the success went to Mehmood's head and he didn't know what to do with it. So like all spoilt, successful men cand women) he lived a reckless life. He took to d rugs. made some very stupid films that did badly at the box office, then left Bombay and settled down on his farm in Bangalore. Result? Other comedians came up and Mehmood was forgotten.

Drema Narayan still wonders how she got into this rut of discodancing and other kinds of sexy dancing in Hindi films, Initially, Prema made outte an impact with her good performance. But, when the good roles stopped coming she took whatever came and that proved her undoing. Now, all they want her to do is . strip and dance But there is very good money in it.



Natasha: beginning of a new story

Manna Rajesh Khanna was a super star he decided to make the biggest film of his causer: Majnoon. Hier tilm was supposed to gurt seven years ago, on 20 December, his birthday. The army band was in attendance Lakhs of rupees were spent on the first shot which was supervised by Kamal Amrohi, Bad luck, however, struck the film soon afterwards. Raiesh tell trom grace and financers left him one by one and the film was shelved, Now, years later Rajesh seems to have tound a little of that lost magic and Mainton is on his mind again. Will be beable to make it this time?

or Natasha Sinha, the 'Anand Aur Anand' girl, love seems to have come in a package deal. It was readymade as it happened to Vijayeta and Kumar Gauray during the shooting of Love Story. Dev Anand nearly forced the young couple to fall in love to facilitate proper shooting of the special scenes in the film. Dev saab is said to have gone out of his way to make Natasha ayarlable for Suncil Anand's 'dates'. Hats off to Dev! One only hopes that his tricks pay him substantial dividends But does it mean that Natasha has conveniently been ignoring her Calcutta boy friend?

Cilk Smita has been real-Iv hardened by her role. as a sex dancer. She admits that she does not feel a thing when she is touched by men, neither positive or negative and while on shooting there are a lot of people who do 🕝 not lose an opportunity to make stude comments at

rundhati, the pretty young girl who acted as a cripple in Thaneer Thaneer is in a dilemma. Because she acted in a love-making sequence in Thaneer Thaneer she has been receiving a lot of similar roles that requires good deal of exposure. She claims she is determined not to accept such roles.



Sivan, overpowered by son

📿 ivaji Ganesan's son, Prabhu, seems to live in awe of his father. He claims that he had acted even better than his father The thought of seeing a film in which he is claimed to have overshadowed his father, is enough to intimidate the young man.

 $m{B}$ haskar, the film director, was highly success. ful in providing a foothold in the Lamil film industry for two younger ¿ brothers—*Hlayarara* and Gangar Amaran, Says Amaran proudly: "Today we are kings in our fields."

Artistes of the national theatre of Britain are simply tascinated by NTR. Recently when they were here, they talked of nothing else other than NTR who has become the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, Instead of answering the questions of the pressmen, they were far too busy questioning The pressmen about STR...

Prema waking from discotever



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Smokers Toothpaste

Brings confidence to your smile brushes away stains

Smokers Toothpaste is a special ayurvedic formula with natural oils and Sinclova 4. It safely cleans the embarassing stains, just like a dentist would. And cares for your teeth and gums.



ARIES (15 April-14 May) An extremely lucky week for most of you. Those of you who are in the creative arts, honours and recognition are in store for you. For those employed,

a change of job or a promotion is indicated Financially too this looks to be a bright week, so speculators and gamblers should take advantage of it. Those with a family, domestic happiness prevails.

Good dates. 4, 6 and 8 Lucky numbers: 2, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: North-east

TAURUS (15 May-14 June) This is going to be a very busy week for fawyers. creative artists and espe-cially for those appearing for examinations. There are fairly good chances of gaining an unexpected fortune. Businessmen will remain busy making new investments the whole week. This will be a pleasant week for those in love.

Good dates: 7, 8 and 9 Lucky numbers: 2, 3 and 4 Favourable direction: South

GEMINI (15 June—14 July)
This is a week when things will tend to move at a slow a pace. Those employed are likely to face difficulties from your colleagues and seniors. Matters regarding business may still remain unsolved At home an elderly member might fall ill and will be a cause of concern Questionable romantic ventures should be avoided

Good dates: 7.8 and 9 Lucky numbers: 2.3 and 4 Favourable direction: West

CANCER (15 July-14 August) A favourable week for you. For politicians, doctors and especially those in the security services, success

lies your way Creative writers will receive hohours. Financially, this week does not seem to be very lucrative Businessmen are advised not to make

new investments. Good dates: 4, 5 and 8 Lucky numbers: 5, 7 and 8. Favourable direction: North-west

LEO (15 August---14 September) This is an excellent week for those in love η Trips and parties are in the Owoffing. Matrimonial alliances are likely to take place. This week the monetary position looks bright

For those unemployed, unexpected jobs might come your way. A letter at the end of the week will bring pleasant news from far Women might receive presents of jewellery

Good dates: 3, 6 and 8. Lucky numbers: 1, 2 and 5. Favourable direction: East

> VIRGO (15 September-14 October) This week will be a pleasant and happy one You will be surrounded by those you love. You are

likely to receive favours from a benefactor. A good week for the sportsmen you will receive awards. Parents will be honoured for their children's activities. This week is favourable for speculation and gambling

Good dates: 5, 8 and 9 Lucky numbers: 1, 2 and 5 Favourable direction: South

LIBRA (15 October—14 November) Disputes and controversies are in store for you this week. Those in professional fields might

come in for some severe criticism. Those in government services are likely to be transferred. But they are advised not to take any drastic decisions pertaining to their career. Financially too this week does not sound good

Good dates: 3, 5 and 7 Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 6. Favourable direction: North

will have to be altered this

SCORPIO (15 November---14 December) The steady n routine that you have had over the past few months

week An elderly member of your family misunderstand you this could lead to a lot of unnecessary problems. You might be forced to change vour residence.

Good dates: 3, 6 and 8 Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: West

SAGITTARIUS (15 Decem-

ber-14 January) This is not the appropriate time to make changes. On the business front and on the professional front you might encounter serious opposition this week. You are asked to be on your guard against treachery and deception this week.

These will, however, be over at the end of the week Good dates; 7, 8 and 9. Lucky numbers: 2, 6 and 7.

Those in love might face difficulties.

Favourable direction: South-east

CAPRICORN (15 January-14 February) Though your financial condition may worsen this week, you

from your friends or colleagues. There is a chance of being deceived, so be on your guard One of your very near relations might fall ill and this could lead to heavy expenditure. A member of the opposite sex who had gone out of your life will return and create problems.

Good dates: 4, 7 and 9, Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 7. Favourable direction: South

March) A very good week for romance, courtship and @@௸ marriage. However, try not to take any unnecessary

risks or hasty decisions. Your relatives will contribute to your share of happiness. A good week for those in service. your impending problems will be solved and you might even be praised by those who matter

Good dates, 4, 7 and 9, Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 7. Favourable direction: South

PISCES (15 March-14 April)

fairly good week except for one snag your health might cause some

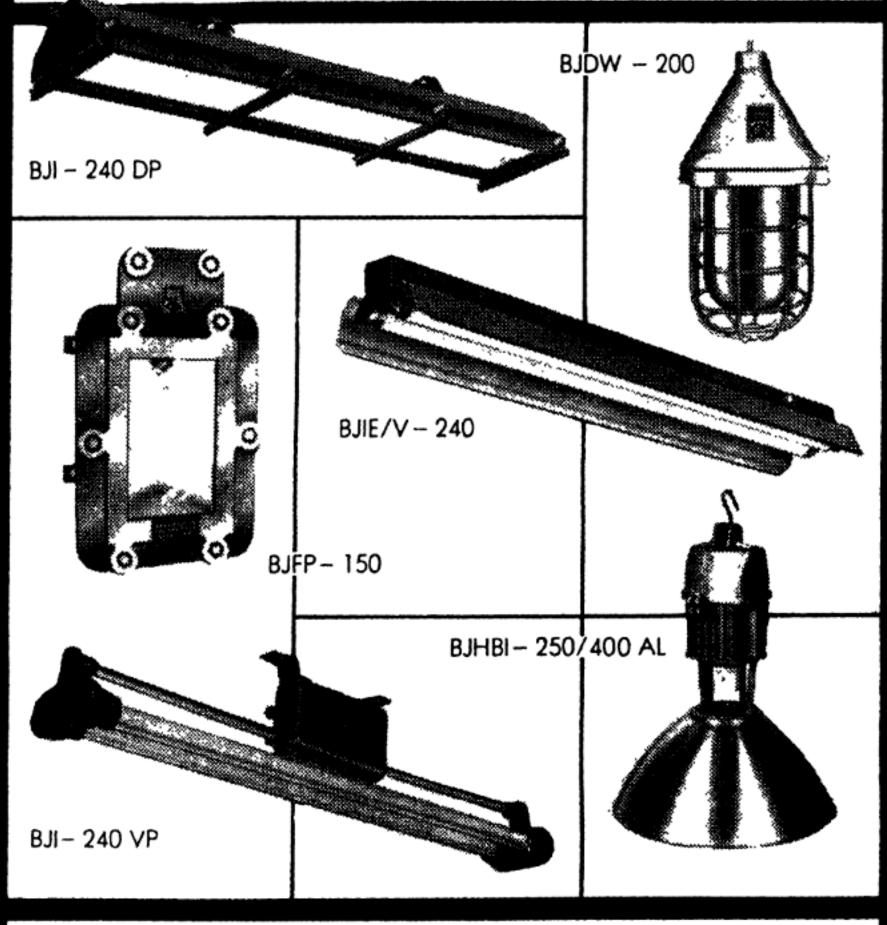
concern Those above 40, especially should take no chances with the weather Try not to overstrain yourself this week Prospects are bright on the financial front. There are chances of your gaining through speculative means.

Good dates: 4, 5 and 6. Lucky numbers: 7, 8 and 9 Favourable direction: North-west.

For those born on Wednesdays: You will be very resourceful in life You are very active and, above all, extremely dynamic and cannot tolerate boredom and mactivity. Your efficiency and hard work will reap good fruit. At a very young age you will be burdened with a lot of responsibilities. Women are usually very

independent and hard-working. You tend to be extremely friendly and helpful and will have a blissful married life. Though you are always on your toes there is one snag which adversely affects all your mental peace and happiness: ill-health. The reason is sheer over-work. The remedy lies in your own hands.

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BALLIA (UP): Two dozen dancing guls gheraoed the Passara police station for more than two hours against the alleged harassment by a clique of young cops and youngsters of the area According to reports the girls alleged that some young policemen and citizens had threatened them that they would have to leave their "professional activities" because these were alluring young men which ultimately leads them into flesh trade. However, the girls refused to accept these allegations and claimed that they were living a normal life through the profession of dancing and singing. Finally, the girls lifted the gherao when they were assured that their grievances would be listened to -- Proneer(S.Saha, Calcutta)

PUNE: It was the proverbial last straw for a young city housewife when her husband asked her to cut her kneelength hair as she was using "too much" soap and oil for its maintenance. Harassed earlier by insatiable demands of the husband for costly gadgets from her father, the woman approached a civil court here to end the seven month marriage. The judicial magistrate, Mr V.K. Deshpande held earlier this week that the woman's statement to the effect that she was provided with a shampoo mixed with DDT by her husband to stem the growth of her hair, amounted to ill-treatment--Hindustan Times(Anil Malik, Saharanpur)

fire the state who were on election duty in Tiruchendur constituency took a "march past" on 2 March in mufti with their heads shaved, and worshipped Senthil Murugan, obviously relieved that their election work had come to a close smoothly, enabling them to return to their heads and carried baskets full of temple prasadam to the places where they were staying—Indian Express(Pushpa thushe, Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu)

Section 1

BANGALORE: The students of a college in Karnataka have invited dacoit queen Phoolan Devi now in a Madhya Pradesh jail following her recent surrender, to be the chief guest at a valedictory function in their college—Indian Express(Kasturi Shenoy, Hyderabad)

NEW DELHI: The country's leading hoteliers and restaurant owners, attending an all-India convention in New Delhi on 1 March stood in silence to "mourn the demise" of tourism in India. This provided a titting end to the convention whose theme was "Are we really serious about tourism?" Among those in the audience grieving at tourism's passing was directorgeneral of tourism, B. Mehra. This piquant situation arose when the Speaker, Mr A. Fernandes of the Oberor group of hotels, complained that though tourism had become the country's largest foreign exchange earner, there was no recognition of this fact in In a half-serious the budget. tone. Mr Fernandes asked the audience to stand in silence to mourn the death of tourism—Indian Express(V. Ramachandran, Madras)

BOMBAY: A passenger, who was late for boarding the New Delhi-bound 25-Dn Deluxe Express hit upon an idea to catch the train. He made an anonymous call to the general manager of the Western Railway and whispered "There's a bomb on board "Railway officials made a clean sweep of the train to Delhi. Passengers grew panicky as policemen ushered them out of the compartments. The train which was to leave Bombay Central at 10 50 am left at 1 pm—Indian Express(Bhagwati Sahai Agaiwal, Aligarh)

BIJAPUR: A pleasant surprise awa ited the people here on the morning of 5 March. The assistant commissioner, Sanjaydas Gupta and the municipal councillors swept the roads from Gandhi Chowk to Siddheswar temple for almost two hours. Mr Gupta, who is also the incharge municipal councillor said he would offer this shramdan hence forth every week—Deccan Herald(P. Sripathi Rao, Udupi)

SHADNAGAR. A strange case of a deceased woman executing her will three days after her death came to light. One Mrs Siddaluri Bheemamma 60, of Charkupally village in Shadnagar taluq, of Mahbubnagar district, expired on 2 February. Surprisingly, her property of 11 15 acres was said to have been documented in favour of one Siddaluri Bhoopal Reddy in Shadnagar sub-registrar's office on 5 February. After due enquiry, the tahasildar of Shadnagar, Mr G. Ranga Rao, refused to issue the certificate as the register showed the date of death as 2 February, 1983—Deccan Chroniclc(Irene Frederick, Secunderabad)

Without Comment

India was very easily forgotten amidst all the charm and sumptuousness laid on for the benefit of the representatives of 100 nations—S.K. Datta-Ray in Statesman

Who made Zia-ul Haq President of Pakistan or for that matter, Castro his country's Prime Minister? These are countries who, hang their Presidents and Prime Ministers—Jay Dubashi in Organiser

Mrs Gandhi is one leader who gives you total freedom to work—V.P. Singh, union minister of commerce in Weekend Review

President Reagan's rhetoric and the whopping increase in the US defence budget were fertile ground for Soviet propaganda in West Europe. It was easy enough to paint Reagan as a warlike character with his tinger on the nuclear button—S. Nihal Singh in The Illustrated Weekly of India



I wish I was (married to Palestine) but Palestine has still not accepted me---(I have fallen in love) only once---Yasser Arafat talking about his love life to Telegraph

I do use make-up and expensive perfumes like Charlie. I love everything I do—Shalinitai Patil in Bombay

How women who apparently need very little clothing themselves, can speak to you about the advantage of being clad in certain fabrics is mysterious to me—RGK in Sunday Review

Films that people don't see, books that people don't read—such is the stuff of which the best of cinema is sometimes made—Chidananda Dasgupta in Indian Express

The heart has pumped right along. It doesn't bother me at all—Barney Clarke, recipient of the first artificial heart to his surgeon William DeVries quoted in Time

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Old Spice Shampoo

Old Spice Shampoo gently washes your hair clean, without robbing your scalp of its nourishing natural oils. Old Spice Shampoo can be used for all types of hair. It leaves your hair soft and manageable with the unmistakable fragrance of Old Spice.

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rjan (Black)



rtisch (White) to move

by Fischer once remarked on American vision that what he most enjoyed about ing chess was watching his opponent's crack Not a very humble sentiment, one must admire his candour

Chessplayers are a very ego conscious breed, though few would be so bold as to admit it, and this ego consciousness can manifest itself directly on play at the chessboard

A good illustration is the opening feuds which tend to develop between two rivals around somebody's pet line. Both assume entrenched and diametrically opposed positions which each will defend with an obduracy that sometimes seems to go well beyond the rational.

Take for example the Botvinnik variation against the Grunfeld, 1 P-Q4 N-KB3 2 P-QB4 P-KN3 3 N-QB3 P-Q4 4 BN-B3 B-N2 5 Q-N3 PxP 6 QxBP 0-0 7 P-K4. In Holland Timman and Sosonko have been waging their own private war in this line for some time, with Timman as Black sustaining alarming casualties. Given that Timman is the stronger player, he could at any time switch to another defence with every expectation of success, yet he refuses.

Another nominee in this line for the Galtieri Award for lost causes is Hungarian grandmaster Andras Adorjan In his youth he twice beat Portisch in this variation Now Portisch is invited to harvest the rewards of his earlier failures. He could be a fool to decline

Black: A. Adorjan White L Portisch Grunfeld Defence, Mexico 1982

P-Q4 N-KB3 2 P-QB4 P-KN3 N-QB3 P-Q4 4 N-B3 B-N2 Q-N3 PxP 6 QxBP 7 P-K4 P-B4?!

An optimistic sacrifice, to say the least, which suggests that Adorjan is not being entirely objective about his chances. 9 N-K5 QN-Q2 8 QxP B-N6

DIAGRAM 10 NxN NxN 11 Q-KN6!

Winning a piece, for if 11 . . . B-K3 12 P-Q5. In mitigation White's move is easy to overlook, but it is just punishment for playing so incautiously.

12 P-KR3 B-R4 P--B4 13 P-KN4P-KR3 14 B-B4+ K-R1 15 Q-K3! PxP 16 PxP N-B3 Of course 16 . . . BxNP 17 RxP+ forces

17 P-B3 BxP 18 P~K6 Afraid that 18 PxB NxP 19 Q-K2 QxP might still leave Black in with a chance.

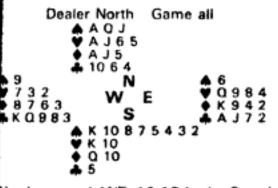
18 . . . B-R4 20 B-K2 R-QB1 19 PxN RxP 21 B-Q2 R-N3 22 N-R4 R-Q3 23 N-B5 Q-N3

24 B-B3 Q-B3 Precipitating a final calamity, but he is quite lost anyway.

25 P-Q5! Resigns. White is threatening OxRP+.

MICHAEL STEAN

minor conventions in bidding have the... and on this deal from a French pairs North-South used one that worked



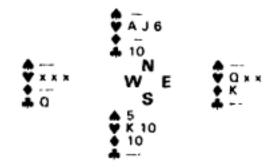
North opened 1NT, 16-18 in the French le, and the bidding continued.

| BOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| | | 1NT | No |
| 2 (1) | No | 3 (2) | No |
| 4NT | No | 54 (3) | No · |
| 6♠ | No | No | No |

 Normal transfer. Indicating good support for spades e indicated suit) and losers in the suit named. The same convention can be used, I imagine, with a suit such as A x x I think this is a better idea than showing a strong side suit.

(3) O or 3 Aces.

South ruffed the second club and drew a round of trumps Instead of playing three on the Ace when West played low. Then he led trumps, arriving at this position.



On the last trump West threw a heart, dummy a club and East, perforce, a heart. South then played King and Ace of hearts, as he knew that West's last card was the Queen of clubs.

TERENCE REESE



During the past 10 years the Post Office has issued more than 200 picture postcards reproducing the designs of British commemorative stamps. Some of the early issues, notably those of 1974 featuring the horse chestnut tree and the first motor fire engine, are now very scarce. The 1975 set of four postcards depicting railway locomotives is also elusive, costing towards £35 in mint condition.

C. W. HILL

What is the currency of Haiti? Somewhere in the South American

ntinent is an imaginary land abounding gold and precious stones, which the rly English adventurer Sir Walter leigh went in search of. What is the me of the land?

. The French resistance movement Ich developed during the German Supation between 1940-45 had a spe-I name. Why were they so called? . Who discovered that steel could be de rust-proof?

Whiskers belong to cats, but what do y signify in physics?

A A Section of the se

The term "White Elephant" has its origins in a custom followed by kings of Thailand. What was the custom?

An animal is also often known as the River Horse. What is it?

What are the constituents of laughing

How many Pilgrim Fathers sailed for America in the Mayflower?

10. What was the Golden Bough?

perina.

10. A giff Aeneas had to take to Prosbecsecution in their own country. ics ou e September 1620 to eacabe 9. 101 English Puritans sailed for Amer-

.

8. Mitrogen and oxygen. 7. The hippopotamus.

worth. recipient more frouble or cost than it is to aiduity any gift which causes the wanted to ruin. Thus the term has come white elephant to any courtier who they 6. The Thai kings used to present a than human hair.

5. They are tiny rods of crystal, thinner made it rust proof.

that 12 per cent of chromium in steel 4. Harry Brearsley in 1912 discovered

good cover for bandits and outlaws. France and Corsica which provided a dense scrub abounding in Mediterranean name was derived from the maquis or 3. They were known as the Maquis. The

> 2. El Dorado. 1. Gourde.

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AH 425 Speaker

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- -- Separate LED's for each channel for peak power indication
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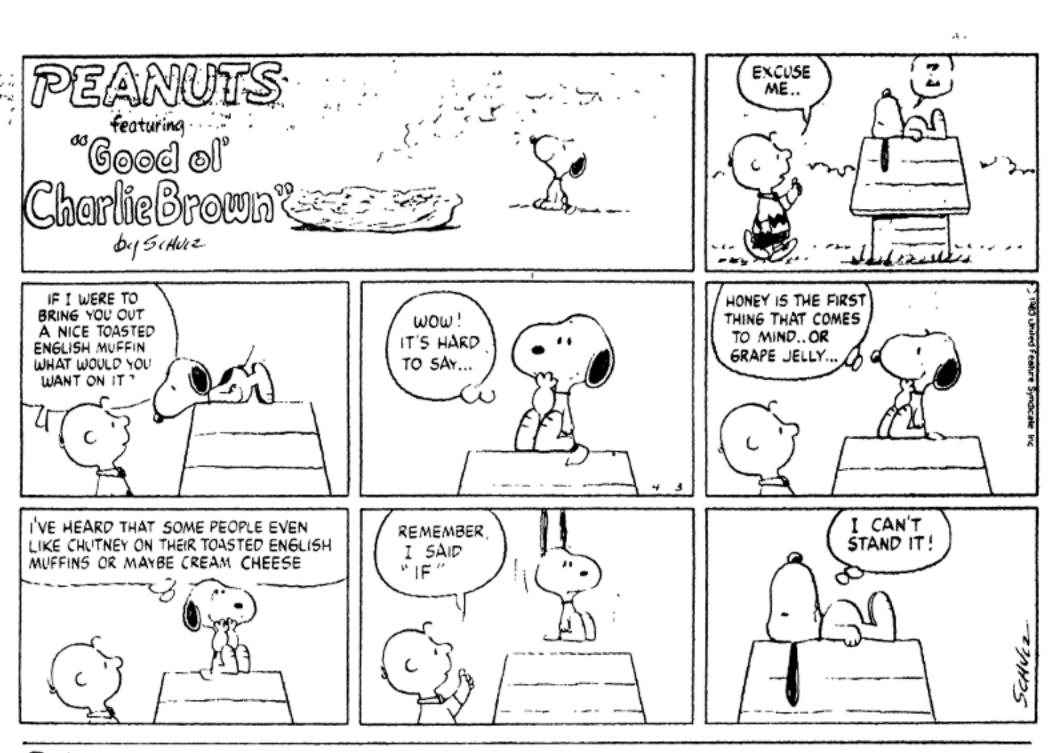
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- Dual cone design offers a wide frequency response.
- Heavy large magnet and exclusive voice coil.

So step in at your friendly Philips dealer. Give your ears a true listening experience.



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Science

Creating new waves

Everybody knows about waves from seeing them on water. They are, of course, surface waves, penetrating a very short distance in water. The famous British physicist and Nobel prizewinner, Lord Rayleigh, as long ago as 1885 expounded how such surface waves travelled over the earth in the wake of an earth-

quake.

In 1965, two American scientists showed how to create acoustic waves in the surface of a piezoelectric material. A piezoelectric material such as quartz or lithium niobate, to name only two, has a strange property. When it is compressed or stretched it produces an electrical voltage. When a series of such tensions and compressions is set up, it creates a waveform which, though not exactly transverse, travels both ways along the surface of the crystal. It a metal contact is placed at one side the wave propagates in one direction only. Because it penetrates a very limited distance into the crystal, it is described as a surface acoustic wave (SAW).

Mention must be made of interdigital transducers (IDTs): They form the bases of all SAW components. An

interdigital transducer converts electro-magnetic signals into acoustic ones, or vice-versa. For example, when two IDTs are separated by a length of the quartz surface and a radio-frequency signal fed into the input transducer, it creates a surface acoustic wave that travels to the second IDT where it is converted back into a radio-frequency signal. Ideally it is not different from the input signal, except that it has been delayed because surface acoustic waves travel much more slowly than radio waves in space or in a good conductor. In other words, the diagram represents a SAW delay line.

The job of a delay line is (need it be said?) to delay or store a signal for a certain time. It has applications in radar, for example. One great interest today is in its use in colour television; this could lead to largescale commercial production.

A lot of research of the past decade or so has indeed been for defence microelectronics. A SAW device is robust and able to withstand great shock. If made from correctly cut quartz it is immune to great temperature changes. (The frequency of a quartz crystal depends on the dimensions of its cut, so that it can control timing in a watch or clock, as in widespread use today.) It is small enough to be compatible with other microelectronic devices. It can go into a guided missile. It can be used in anti-jamming circuits. It is easy to make and comparatively inexpensive.

SAW devices form subsytems within more complex circuits. The people interested are microelectronics engineers, for what is called the 'processing' of a signal, which in modern times is very complex and involves some fairly advanced mathematics. Processing involves filtering, bandpassing, storing, delaying, selecting a desired signal from clutter (or irregular interference on radar screen from echos, rain, etc), and so on. Of the many papers produced in the past decade, very many are concerned with the overcoming defects not so far mentioned. There is capacitance between metal strips. There is resistance in them. There is re-radiation from them. There are losses in the piezoelectric material. There may be unwanted phase distortion. These are but a few of the difficulties that suggest that SAW technology is not really at all simple.

C. L. Boltz



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Nature also strikes the right balance of body building foods (protein), energy foods (carbohydrates, fats) and health guardians (vitamins) to make mother's milk ideal for the new born. (For instance, breast-fed babies don't usually suffer from scurvy, a vitamin C deficiency.)

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Breast-feeding is now getting more and more popular even in the West as its nutritional and other benefits are getting more widely appreciated.

But what if you're not able to breast-feed for reasons of health or, maybe, because your milk is not sufficient for your haby? Of course, you must choose the best alternative for him.

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Nutritionally well balanced with prime-quality protein, easy to digest fats and carbohydrates and the right blend of essential vitamins and minerals.

It's easy to mix in previously boiled warm water: no need to make a paste first.

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And, Amulspray is the most economical among tinned baby foods.

Because it is made by the modern milk complex that pioneered India's "white revolution".

But be sure you use boiled water and hygienically sterilised utensils and feeding bottles. And, follow the directions for use on the pack strictly to avoid overdilution and ensure adequate nourishment

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ASP/AS-1/83



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What does the New Allwyn have in



HITACHI

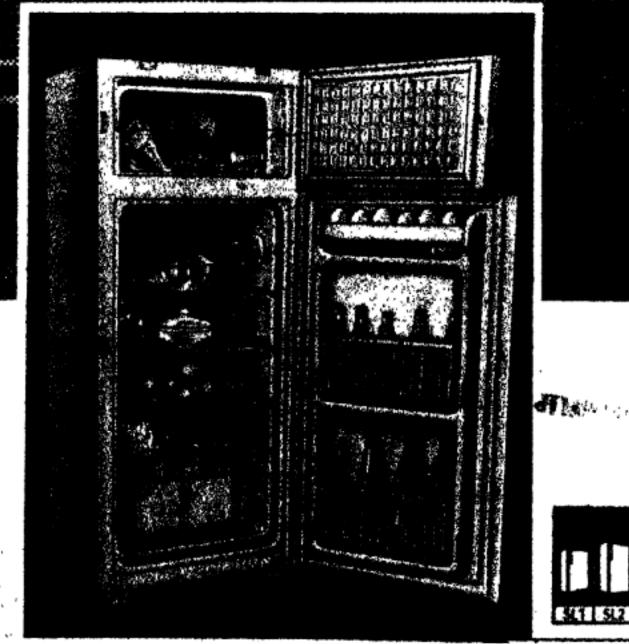
Hitachi World-renowned electrical giants and innovators in Japan. A by-word in the wonder world of Japanese technology, they now help create the new Allwyn 2000 SL Refrigerators. Their compressor is made under licence from Hitachi, so you get an exclusive 7-year guarantee. The new Allwyn now lasts longer than any other refrigerator, and gives years of trouble-free service. Now the technology of the 80's is here. Trouble-free Japanese technology!

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KERALA MINISTER'S FAUX PAS



CM Karunakaran: diminished image

THE result of the Nemom byelection has certainly diminished the image of the Congress(I)-led coalition government of chief minister K. Karunakaran in Kerala. The CM had been elected to the Assembly from this constituency by a margin of 3,000 votes in the May elections

last year. This time the voters returned the CPI(M) led front candidate by over 8,500 votes. An incident during the campaign has added insult to the Congress(I)'s injury. A minister in the Karunakaran team, who belongs to one of the coalition parties and is a newcomer to politics, being a former judge, has become the butt of a joke. The minister, who looks after the excise portfolio, was asked to campaign in Nemom by the chief minister. The minister asked his supporters to organise his election tour to the constituency, which is on the outskirts of the state capital, Trivandrum. His men also fixed up an election meeting at Neyyattinkara. Neyyattinkara is not, however, within the Nemom constituency. The people listened to the minister's longwinded speech in bewilderment and only realised the purpose of the meeting at the end when the minister appealed to them to vote for the Congress(I) candidate in Nemom. Those who understood the faux pas burst out laughing. Only then did the minister realise that he was addressing an election meeting outside the constituency where the byelection was being held.

SNUBS FOR US JOURNALISTS

al politics.

SPIRIT OF NAM?

MR Kamal Nath, the irrepressible

Member of Parliament from

Chhindwara, can teach professional

public relations men a lesson or

two. He was a member of the Indian

delegation at the non-aligned con-

ference, but was seen more in the

media centre adjoining the confer-

ence hall, than inside the hall itself.

Instead of attending to the business

of the NAM, Mr Kamal Nath kept

himself occupied in the cafeteria

run by the ITDC at the media

centre. No doubt, he became the most sought after delegate for

mediamen. Mr Nath had been a

member of the Indian delegation to

the last session of the United Na-

tions general assembly as well. One

wonders if Mr Nath is on the

threshold of launching a new con-

cept in diplomacy-cafeteria diplomacy. After all, along with his

childhood friend, Sanjay Gandhi, Mr Nath did usher in an entirely

new, unconventional era in nation-

WHILE the mediamen in general were satisfied with the arrangements at the NAM media centre, two American journalists, posted in Delhi, were always in a complaining mood. Their incessant badgering made the normally cooltempered Principal Information Officer (PIO), Mr U.C. Tiwari, admonish them one day "How come only you have complaints?" the PIO asked them in a firm but polite way. This exchange was witnessed by many African and Arab journalists, who had come to cover the Summit. The firm handling of these two western mediamen by an Indian officer immediately drew appreciative remarks from them. There were many sidelights to the NAM, but this one certainly reflected the mood of the non-aligned nations. TAILPIECE: NAM's media committee had one name with no designation against it, as was the case with other members. There was a flurry among the journalists to find out who Mr Pothen Philip, the undesignated committee member, was. Ultimately it was discovered that Mr Philip is a private person, hence the absence of a designation after his name. How did he get onto the committee? A powerful person in the Prime Minister's secretariat had personally put him there.

D.E. NIZAMUDDIN

ASSISTANT WITH MIDAS TOUCH

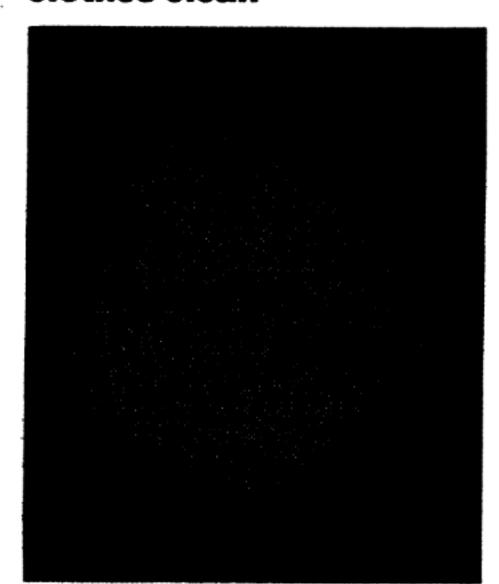
MINISTERIAL circles in the capital will feel the absence of an officer with the Midas touch. Mr Ashok Pande, son-in-law of former union minister Kedar Pande, who has served on the staff of many ministers, has finished his term in Delhi and is being sent back to Bihar. He came to be known as the special assistant with the Midas touch because two of the ministers he served under in succession in 1980 went back to their states as chief ministers. The ministers being Mr janaki Balladh Pathalk and Mr 1. Anjaiah, who left Delhi to become the chief ministers of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh respectively. Mr Pande then became the aide to Mr Shivraj Patil and was with Mr Patil in the defence and commerce ministries till the minister was shifted to the science, technology and electronics ministry. (Incidentally, Mr Patil was at one time tipped to go to Bombay as the Maharashtra chief minister; had this materialised, Mr Pande would have scored a hat trick—that of serving under three prospective chief ministers in a row.) Despite



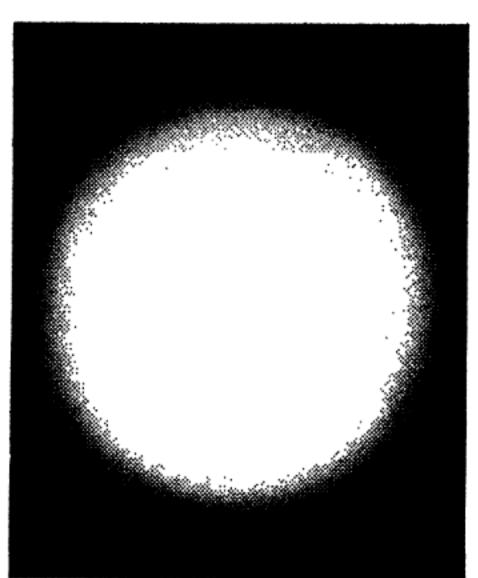
T. Anjaiah: one of the baneficiaries

being a minister's son-in-law, Mr Pande has not been known to exert undue political influence—except for one thing. He used his special position to get his IAS cadre changed from Assam to Bihar, his homestate. So, as a result of the Prime Minister's directive, normally Mr Pande should have gone back to strife-torn Assam. This farsighted act by him in 1980, however, will ensure him a posting in Bihar now.

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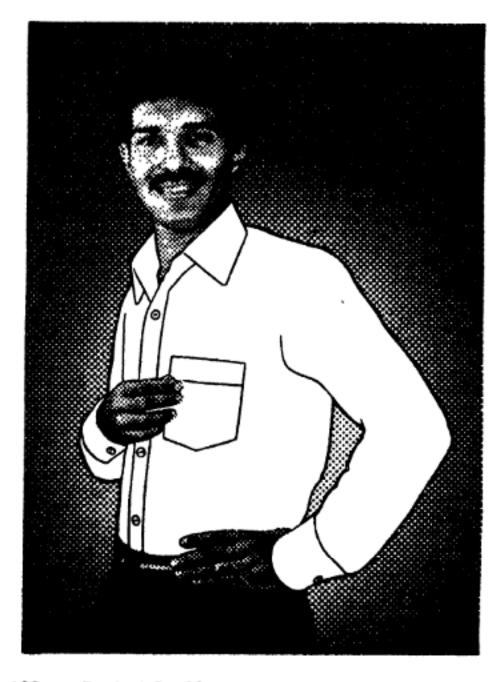
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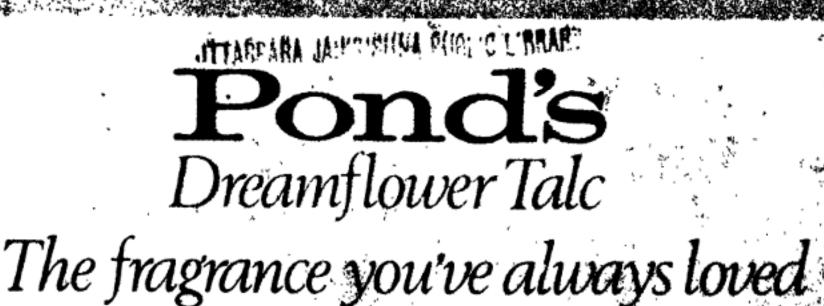
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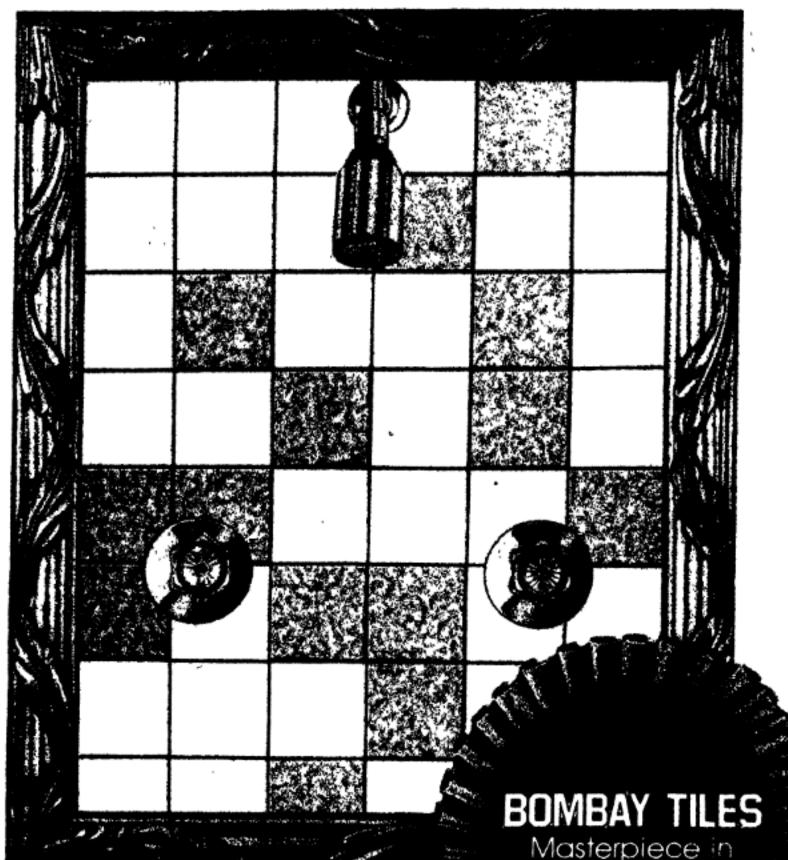
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In less than two years after he left his ashram in Pune, Bhagwan Rajneesh has set up a sprawling empire in Oregon. USA, complete with a fleet of Rolls Royce cars. Rajneesh-puram set up on the wastelands of Oregon, is being rapidly converted into a flourishing city, with its own police force. The therapies, including sex and song, are still a part of the life of the Bhagwan's disciples. Recently, however, a petition filed on behalf of Rajneesh, to grant him a permanent resident status in the USA was turned down by the immigration authorities. There are even chances that the Bhagwan may have to leave the USA soon. A firsthand report by Susmita Gupta from Oregon.

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Four non-Congress(I) chief ministers of the south recently held a meeting in Bangalore to discuss and resolve common problems facing their states. Many termed this formation of a southern CMs' council as a direct threat to the centre. Anita Pratapland Shubha Singh report on the conclave of southern CMs and its implications.

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With the surrender of Phoolan Devi in February this year, the last of the dreaded women dacoits is out of the Chambal ravines. Yet, Phoolan is nowhere near in stature as Putli Bai, the first woman dacoit to have hit the headlines years ago. Tavleen Singh traces the history of women dacoits from Putli to Phoolan.

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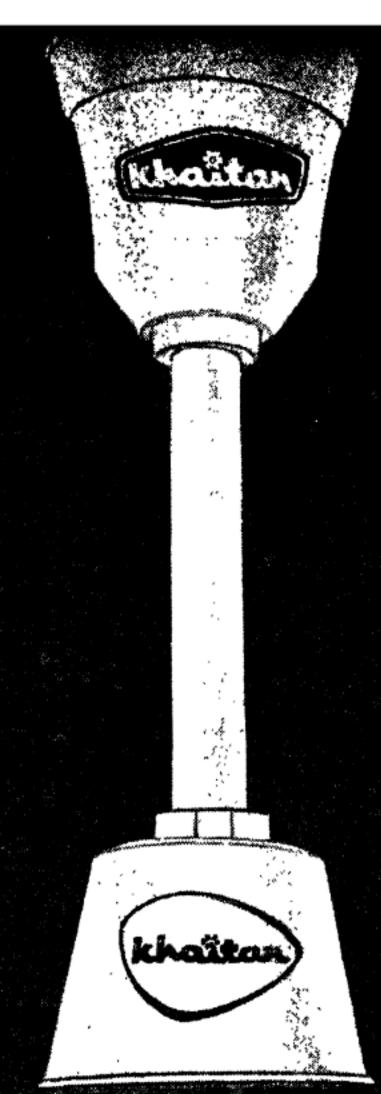
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Aimer Shareef

∞ had to go to Ajmer in response to a court summons. It was a long and dusty drive from Delhi through Jaipur and Kishengarh. Every 50 kilometres appeared hillocks crowned by ancient fortresses holding promise on mountains lying abead. But rock escarpments flattered out into andless khaki plains full of thorny scrub, cactus and withered crops. The presiding ucities were sun and dust. I asked my Rajasthani friends: "How is it that in this land scorched by the sun, your favourite colours are a ficry red and golden yellow both of which remind one of fire?" They answered: "Don't they look attractive?" I had to concede Rajasthani women have God's gift of jaamazebi-the ability to look attractive in any dress of any colour.

Having made a brief appearance hafare the magistrate, there was time enough I ir ziarat. No one who goes to Ajmer leaves without paying homage to the tomb of its patron-saint, Khwaja Moieenuddin Chisti Ghareeb Nawaz-protector of the poor. To wit Allama Iqbal: Di!-e-be-taab ja pahuncha diyaar-

ε-pect-e-pect-e-Sanjar me Mufassar ho jahaan darman-idard-i-na-shakebaee

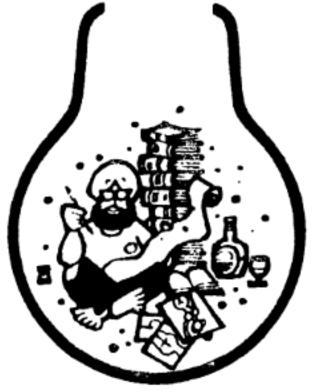
(The restless soul found its way to rieg abode of the holy man from Sanjar

Here is available the antidote to

the pains of disbelief).

Chisti's mausoleum like those of Nizamuddin Auliya in Delhi, and of other Sufi saints has become a place of pilgrimage for all communities in the truly secular sense ar we in India interpret the word secular, equal respect for all religions: *sarv dharma samabhaya*. But it pains me to see that this remains a one-way traffic. Hindus and Sikhs in their thousands visit the mausoleums of Muslim saints, it is vare to find a Muslim at a Hindu temple or a Sikh gurdwara. The mausoleum of Data Ganj Baksh in Lahore was built by Maharaja Ranjit Singh's wife, the beautiful silver salver that hangs in the portal of Chisti's tomb is a present from the Golden Temple of Amritsar. To the best of my knowledge in recent times the only Muslim who made generous donations to non-Muslim shrines was the late Nizam of Hyderabad.

The atmosphere that pervades Muslim dargahs leaves much to be desired. Their caretakers have reduced these holy places to markets of commerce. They pester visitors



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

to make donations for the langar (kitchen) and offer charhawa (ciferings).It needs a brave man to brush them and the pestilence of beggars aside to get on with his

fatena (prayers).

Amongst the dignitaries who came to pray at the Chisti dargah last month were Begum Zia-ul Haq and President Ershad. The citizens of Ajmer were puzzled over the discrimination practised by our government in the courtesies extended to them. Begum Zia-ul Haq was flown from Delhi to Jaipur by an air force plane and then by helicopter (another flew alongside as escort) to Ajmer. She also did the return journey by helicopter and special plane. General Ershad was sent by the regular airlings' commercial flight to Jaipur and on to Ajmer (125 kilometres) by car. Since he had to attend a reception in Delhi in the evening and our airlines could not guarantee that the Bo:nbay-Ahmedabad-Jaipur-Delhi flight would be on time, the entire return journey from Ajmer to Delhi was done by car. Begum Zia is only the wife of the President of Pakistan, General Ershad is President of Bangladesh. Was this discrimination a deliberate exercise to convey some inscrutable message to our eastern neighbour? Or was it a faux pas committed by the protocol division?

Timeless orientals

The guru-shishya relationship ended with RamRajya. In the kaliyug that we are living in even the

guru-guru and the shishya-shishya relationship has gone awry. Let me start with the guru-guru equation. For the last three years Delhi's gossip circles have been regaled by details of the story of a headmaster's peccadillos with lady teachers on his staff. One episode came out in the open when a very comely teacher, who happened to be the wife of a senior civil servant, lodged a complaint to the governing body of the school that the headmaster had tried to embrace her. An enquiry committee consisting of a retired Governor, a retired Chief Justice and a judge of the Supreme Court, a retired secretary of the central government and a retired general deliberated over the matter for over a year and decided that the charge had not been substantiated. The aggrieved lady teacher took the case to the High Court and then to the Supreme Court which threw the case back to the school committee. Where else in the world except India would gentlemen of such eminence waste so many hours trying to find out whether or not a man had tried to kiss a woman-not actually done so, but only tried to do so?

Megnwhile, in another institution an arts teacher seduced one of his girl students and made her pregnant. In another a boy whipped out a knife and stabbed a girl who had been turning up her nose at him. In another school a boy brandished a revolver at his principal. And in yet another three boys beat up their teacher. Nothing novel about these occurrences except that the instances I have cited all come from Delhi's elitist schools where it costs upwards of Rs 300 per month to "educate" a child.

Ñot cricket

A paunchy politician who had never played any games save partyhaazi found himself appointed minister for sports. He took his job seriously and began to study the intricacies of soccer, hockey volleyball, etc. All these he found relatively easy to follow but when it came to cricket he felt he was on slippery ground. Nevertheless, he persisted and slowly caught up with its jargon of maiden overs, full tosses, sixers and silly mid-ons. He studied the Indian team's performance against the West Indies and seeing how well its tail wagged in its second innings when all seemed lost, sent a cable to Captain Kapil Dev giving his well-considered opinion: "I would advise you to play the second innings first."

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Mrs Gandhi uses the opposition parties to her advantage

the opposition parties with disdain, but she is not averse to using them in times of difficulty. They have been used and they know it: there is little that they can do about it as they have been consistently outmanoeuvred. She sees to it that they have little chance of sharing praise and every chance of sharing blame.

Both the Assam and Punjab issues, where the opposition parties have been brought in, show how the odium of failure has been cleverly apportioned. The general impression being given is that there has been a concerted effort to solve the two problems and the government has even sought the opposition's assistance on efforts to retrieve the situation. However, the fact is that by the time opposition parties were invited into the arena, it was already too late. Negotiations had got snarled and the government as well as the representatives of the two agitations had taken up positions from which it was difficult to

Take Assam for instance. Hawks in the home ministry had held talks with AASU and AAGSP leaders for over a year and Mrs Gandhi had gone to Gauhati herself to settle what should be the "cut-off year," that is, the date after which people who came from Bangladesh would not be treated as Indian cutzens and would be ousted. After taking the position that the cut-off year be 1971, the then Assam Governor, Mr L.P. Singh, mentioned 1967 but subsequently went back on that offer.

Since no visible headway was being made, the government brought in the opposition parties. By that time New Delhi had even instigated communal elements in the state to make their own claims

and had thus tarnished a movement which was till then secular in character. The cause of the communal forces was not only prepared, but also argued, by New Delhi. The opposition parties allowed themselves to be led up the garden path.

I have with me a home ministry note which gives the gist of the opposition leaders' negotiations with the Assam representatives The note says, among other things, "The MPs generally considered the last proposals dated 23 September of AASU and AAGSP and were of the view that these could not form the basis for discussions as these reflected an extreme position. Some MPs referred to the consensus of the March 1980 meeting to take 1971 as the cut-off year and said that if any departure was to be made they should be consulted. There was, however, general support to the suggestion that government should not go back on what had already been indicated to the agitators and that no further concessions should be made. They also cautioned, against giving concessions which might strengthen divisive and secessionist forces. The meeting ended with a joint state-

I do not know how faithful this record is to the proceedings, but at least two opposition leaders who participated in the negotiations deny this. The government itself denies the existence of such a note.

Now take Punjab. The general belief is that the Akalis were intransigent while the government was willing to accommodate them as far as possible. Again the opposition has allowed itself to be used because the truth is that Mrs Gandhi has not been wanting to solve the problem because of political considerations. It is an open secret that when the problem was nearing

a solution, New Delhi instigated Mr Bhajan Lal to make Haryana stake its claim on Chandigarh and the river waters. Later, the centre brought in Rajasthan. How could the opposition have been of any help when New Delhi had enlarged the problem and made the solution more difficult by bringing the two Congress(I)-run states into the picture.

I have it from a top Congress(I) leader that Mr Bhajan Lal was summoned to Delhi and asked to organise an anti-Akali front. This does not mean that all that the Akalis have been doing—particularly convening a meeting of the Sikh ex-servicemen at Amritsar—is justified, but New Delhi has not been an honest broker and has involved the opposition parties only to place on record that even the opposition drew a blank.

Perhaps the opposition parties have made efforts, independent of the government's set formulae. Perhaps they have brought some change in the stand of the Assam agitation representatives and the Akalis. But it is not known to the public. Why do the opposition parties not issue a statement on Assam and Punjab to explain their role?

Sometimes I get the feeling that the opposition leaders are eager to give the people the impression that they are important enough to be asked to be a part of the decision-making set-up. Tired of being in the wilderness, they feel that in associating themselves with the government they are getting into the limelight. What they do not realise is that their credibility gets diluted in the process.

The opposition should have learnt from their experience of joining the National Integration Council. Every now and then the council, which has the opposition parties represented on it, meets, discusses the same problem over and over again and does nothing except for dotting the i's and crossing the t's. How many times have the same vague instructions been issued to the authorities to deal with problems without result? The opposition has no power to see them implemented or hold anyone accountable.

Since the opposition has allowed itself to be tagged along with the negotiations on Assam and Punjab these days, it has been difficult to find out where the opposition leaders differ from the government. This has also made the representatives of the Assam agication and the Akalis in Punjab take extreme postures because they feel isolated. The bridge that the opposition provided in the past has been demolished because it looks as if the opposition and the government are on the same side.



Centre is guilty

Who will end the Assam mightmare? (13 March) was another laudable effort by Sunday. Congratulations to Subir Roy for his excellent coverage. Brajesh Mishra, Romkela

The camage broke all records of mass massacre. The electron, which were thrust upon the people of Assam by the centre, have sharply divided the Assamese society. Fiery speeches by Congress(I) leaders have only escalated tension in Assam. I wonder if the Constitution states that elections

should be held even at gun-point. The centre is solely responsible for the unprecedented carnage in Assam.

Abir Padhy, Berhampur

While appreciating Sunday's coverage of the elections in Assam, I would like to comment on the views expressed by Samar Mukherjee and Indrajit Gupta. Even after such unprecedented violence, the views of these opposition leaders seemed motivated Holding elections in such a tense situation and with so many lives at stake, can never be justified—not even on the plea that it was a Constitutional necessity. Prasanta Sharma, Dibrugarh

Mrs Gandhi cannot end the Assam nightmare. The people of Assam have to help themselves Arjun Chandra Panda, Cuttack

Subir Roy presented a distorted picture of Assam Even today the Muslims and the Hindus live in amity in Assam, belying Mr Roy's assertion that Assam is a house divided. Moreover Mr Roy's conclusion that the Muslims in Assam will no longer be sympathetic to the foreigners' cause is also unfounded. The Muslim population did not vote in the elections thereby displaying its solidarity with the Assamese cause. Muktadir Khan, Gaulisti

This has reference to the colour transparency of armed Assam villagers published on the cover. It is very common to find in any Assamese village people going to work with daos and shovels. The picture on the cover showed such a scene and not as mentioned in the caption

S. K. Biswas, Sibsagar

Innings well played

A shis Ray's Goodbye Vishwanath? (13 March) made interesting reading. The little master's exit from the Indian cricket scene has created a void R. Balari, Kancheepuram

While appreciating Ashis Ray's profile of Vishwanath, I would like to point out one incident which Mr Ray did not mention. In the silver jubilee Test against England in Bombay, Vishwanath (who was leading India) recalled Bob Taylor after the latter was given out by the umpire. It is quite likely that we will never see such sporting gestures again. Pramod Sahoo, Rourkela

I only hope that Vishwanath will regain his form and once again delight us with his delectable square cuts Kurban Ukani, Calcutta

The Indian selectors have only displayed their irresponsibility by excluding Vishwanath from the Caribbnas four. In Pakistan there was a feet animed bid so isolate this little across. Morrower, one series is corrainly no enough to prove that a bateman bas test his four. The selectors should have given him one more change.

V. Shonti, Madros

After the Pakistad iction in as apporent that Vishworth La I is at his form. The rasping senare out and the delectable late cuts for which he was knownhad deserted the little mester. The selectors have fone a good job by dropping him. After all, we have a lot of sucketing talent in the country.

R. Prokash, Bangalore

Sheer insanity

wish to carginitulate Sunday for publishing the detailed repert and moving photographs on Assam (Blood and tears, 6 March) Unfortunately, the issue in question disappeared from the stands in Assam and though people were willing to pay double the price, many could not lay their hands on the issue. One of my friends bought a copy for Rs 20 because he was genuinely moved by the coverage of the Assamriots. When I went looking for a copy I found that the agents had sold off most of their stock; the few copies that remained had been booked by readers. I then contacted an agent in Tinsukia and managed to obtain a copy for double the price (Rs five). Even now many of my friends are requesting me to help them get hold of Sunday, issue dated 6 March. Unfortunately, I cannot help them beyond lending them the precious copy that I possess Chandra Shekhar Singh, Digboi

There is clearly a constipation of thoughts and ideas within the ruling party. The docile, artistic Assamese have been forced into violence. A provision in the Constitution has been exploited to hold the bloodiest elections. In post-independence history.

Assam stands on the croseroads. Who has a solution to the problem?

Alok Swaroop Sharaa, Bombay

Summay did an excellent job by exposing the true state of affairs in Assam today.

Pradip Ghosh, Digboi

An excellent cover story Indeed, blood and tears flowed down the Brahmaputra. The question is: When will the fire be extinguished?

A. K. Ghatak, Kourajhan (Assam)

The pyre has been lit in Assam. Rajeewa Ranjan Piadeep. Chapra (Bihar)

The issue of Sunday dated 6 March '83 was so much in demand that I found it very difficult to get hold of a copy. We in Assam are grateful to Sunday.

Nirmal Dutta, Margherita (Assam)

The photographs were positively horrifying. Shame on Mrs Gandhi; her greed for power and false prestige resulted in the Assam carnage. She should be taken to court. The bereaved families must be given justice. If Nixon can be taken to task for bugging the Democratic Party headquarters, why can't Mrs Gandhi be punished for the crime she has committed in Assam?

Bharat Menta, Calcutta

The cover story and the photographs left me stunned. I cannot believe that such inhuman and barbaric crimes can be committed in the twentieth century. We got to know of Bhagalpur blindings through Sureay; and now it is Assam. I do not know what steps have been taken to prevent another carnage in Assam, but I do know that Aloke Mitra's photographs brought tears to my eyes. I can only pray that in future innocent children will not be made victims of dirty politics in our country. Be it a Bengali or a Muslim or a Sikh, no one can feel secure in a country which is plagued by this peculiar brand of politics,

Dilip Kumar Bosc, New Delhi

Insanity has plagged our country. What a fall! What a brand of nationalism which grows out of abysmal ignorance and shamelessness!

D. Ghosh, South Ramnagar

So this is Indira's India: the celebrated, much-publicised 'largest democracy in the world'

Nirad C. Mohanta, Rourkela

Is Bhagavat clean?

This has reference to How Gundu Rao helped his friends (News, 27 February). The correspondent, Louise Fernandes, referred to the allotment of a stray site made by the Bangalore Development Authority to me; she also implied in her report that I had made a false affidavit to the effect that I had stayed in Karnataka for at least ten years.

As a responsible person, I know the seriousness of making a false declaration, and I have never done it nor do I plan to do it in the future. My affidavit only declares that neither myself, nor my wife, nor my dependent children own any site in Bangalore city, and this is a fact. It was very unfair on the part of Ms Fernandes to have cast aspersions without bothering to verify the facts. I had expected a magazine of Sunday's standing to exercise greater care in publishing reports; which contain personal references.

Louise Fernandes replies: Since my bonafides have been questioned, I wish to bring the following facts to Mr

T. K. K. Bhagavat, Bangalore

Bhagavat's notice:

1. According to Mr K. K. Murthy, former chairman of the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), no person was given the allotment in question whose position (vis-a-vis land acquisition under BDA rules) did not fully comply with the letter of the law. Therefore, according to Mr Murthy, every person on that list, which included Mr Bhagavat's name, fitted the two main conditions specified by the BDA: a) that the person seeking allotment should not own any other site or

Wanted: Respect, love

I was shocked by The inhuman face of Communal frenzy (27 March). Congratulations to Sunday for yet another brilliant investigative report.

R. K. Das, Ganjam

Madhu Jain's investigation was revealing. Out of the three incidents mentioned by her, the third one was really shocking. When will our countrymen learn to respect people of all religions? T. Appala Swamy, Parvatipuram

The communal flareup as reported by Ms Jain was clearly a result of the poison which is there in the minds of our Hindu brothers. Muslims are a peace-loving community; yet they have been subjected to injustice. I appeal to all in India not to be instigated by self-seeking politicians and accept Muslims as their own brothers and sisters.

Alamgir Sani, Calcutta

The government should set up special tribunals to deal with communal riots. Mohammad Shakeel, Delhi

Madhu Jain's report read more like a modern Hindi film story. Such writings only help to escalate the tension which is already there. Instead of dramatising the whole incident, Ms Jain should have suggested solutions.

H. C. Jaikwal, Moradabad

property in the city and b) that he/she should have been a resident/domicile of Bangalore for a period of ten continuous years prior to the date of registration. My own understanding—arrived at after verification of facts to the best of my ability—was that Mr Bhagavat (and other persons mentioned in my report in this connection) did not fit the second condition and was hence not entitled to the land.

Mr Bhagavat has rightly pointed out the need to verify facts before going to press. I am also aware of this need and so I attempted, within the constraints of magazine deadlines, to verify these facts. I understand, even by the above letter, that Mr Bhagavat does not concede that he has not been a resident/ domicile of Bangalore for a period of ten continuous years, having held at least one other responsible position (in the Reserve Bank of India) before taking up his current assignment as chairman of the Vysya Bank. I did my cross checking. In fact, I did attempt to get the facts "straight from the horse's mouth," so to speak; but, unfortunately, Mr Bhagavat was not available for our interview during that time, as I was informed when I telephoned. I then contacted a leading industrialist in Bangalore who is known to be closely associated with Mr Bhagavat and his bank. He confirmed my information that Mr Bhagavat had taken his current assignment in Bangalore not too long ago. I then contacted the department which handles the BDA to find out whether the two preconditions (mentioned earlier) could be waived. I also spoke to several senior government

officials in this connection. According to all sources, these rules are an "absolute must."

As Mr Bhagavat is probably aware, the examination of the BDA records was impossible at that point in time. The records had been impounded by the authorities for scrutiny. I could only go by the facts that were available to me—one of them being that, despite the government stay order on the stray sites' allocations, most of the sites had already been registered. Naturally, this too could not be confirmed.

In conclusion, I wish to clarify that I did not say at any point that Mr Bhagavat had circumvented the rules. What I did say, and I quote from my report, was that "if they (Mr Bhagavat and Major General S. N. Bhaskar, chau man and managing director, Bharat Earth Movers Limited) have signed affidavits to this extent (that they have lived in Karnataka for the stipulated ten years), as they must have if Mr Murthy's claim to have done everything 'within the letter of the law' is right, then here itself is enough reason to suspect foul play." In fact, I was not questioning Mr Bhagavat's bonafides as much as those of Mr Muithy.

If Mr Bhagavat has not registered the plot in question, since rules apparently do not permit him to do so, and if he has no intention of registering it because a sense of fair play does not permit him to do so, and if he has made a public declaration to this effect, then, I appear to owe Mr Bhagavat an apology. If the case is otherwise, then I should be permitted to stand by all that was contained in my report

Sat Sri Akal, Khushwantji

Thanks to Sunday for inviting Khushwant Singh to write the regular Gossip sweet and sour column. I am sure that the grand old man of Indian journalism will keep up the tradition which he had set with Malice towards one and all. V. K. Wadhawan, New Delhi

We welcome Khushwant Singh to Sunday. His first despatch (13 March) brought back memories of the Weekly in its heydays. Mr Singh's column is yet another feather in the Sunday cap.

V. Raghuraman, Madras

Nomoshkar, Sardarji: I love you (but sorry, I'm not a girl). And so what if Bengalis cannot stomach your jokes? Doesn't Sunday have a nationwide readership? And aren't your fans scattered all over the country?

J. Japani, Hyderabad

We Bengalis are well-known for our sense of humour, so please don't switch off your bulb Mr Singh. Your wit will be relished every week, and the popularity of Sunday will know no bounds, thanks to your Gossip. S. K. Guha, Calcutta

Welcome Sardar ji-to the world of Bengalis. Far from smashing your bulb, we will always like to see it burning

Seema Alavı, New Delhi

Mr Singh has made a Gavaskar-like opening with Gossip sweet and sour. D. R. Gulati, New Delhi.

As a Sunday reader I welcome Khushwant Singh. His debut was fine. May I remind him that his readers are not exclusively Bengali. In fact, most of the Sunday readers are non-Bengalis.

Mr Singh was right in his assessment of the seventh NAM. What would have happened to NAM if Israel and South Africa did not exist? Mr Singh could not have come closer to the truth; and now that he is free from the cage, I hope his pen will move as freely as it did in the 13 March issue of Sunday. We look forward to his column every week.

M. L. Haldar, Bistupur (West Bengal)

Welcome, Mr Singh. Do give us more and more of your provocative gossip—with or without the bulb (it hardly matters). It is good fun reading your column. But please, pleasespare us the pro-Indira stuff for which you are notoriously famous. Ramachandra Tripathy, Madras

Rajneesh in America: A firsthand report

Vegetables, sex and song

The godman from Pune, Bhagwan Rajneesh, has set up a flourishing empire in the USA where he settled down after suddenly leaving Pune in July 1981. He still continues to hold therapy sessions complete with sex and song. Recently, however, the US immigration authorities have turned down the Bhagwan's petition to settle down in the USA as a permanent resident and there are chances that the godman may be forced to leave the country soon. SUSMITA GUPTA reports from Rajneeshpuram, Oregon, USA.



he road to nirvana was paved heavily with ice this winter and only those who had tyre chains in their cars could make it past the steep inclines along the driveway twisting through the barren Eastern Oregon hills. Several miles into the sagebrush and juniper, this correspondent got the first hints of the latest version of Shangri la; a sign on the side of Highway 18 read: Rajneeshpuram 18 miles But not everyone was delighted at the thought of such a Shangri la in Oregon, the signboard was riddled with bullet holes. Clearly this 'spiritual paradise' created by Acharya Rajneesh was not without its quota of devils.

Bhagwan (whom the local Americans call a Bag of Fun, a pun on the way they pronounce the word) Rajneesh was controversial enough a god when he left India on 1 June 1981, and the controversy followed him across the seas It might follow him on his way back home too, far his days in the United States are numbered. His request to remain there permanently has been rejected. And he and his group do not have too many friends outside the

government either.

Most American newspapers have labelled Rameesh the leader of a sex cult. The Thousand Friends of Oregon, a land-use watchdog organisation filed a you-can't-build-a cityhere lawsuit against his disciples. Citizens of Constitutional Cities have asked his disciples questions about the conflict between the church and the state. The popular CBS TV programme 60 minutes questioned them about their anti-Semitic jokes, the 27 Rolls Royces driven by Raineesh himself and their jaw-andbody breaking therapy sessions. A popular sticker stuck on the same signboard read: "Better dead than red (red to signify the saffron motif of the disciples)." But what came as the biggest jolt to the Rajneesh commune was when US Immigration denied Rajneesh's request to remain in the United States (the decision is being appealed).

Rumours abound in plenty: an orgy every night. A Jim Jones type brainwash. A surive the nuclear war enclave. A self awareness camp for a lot of people whose self images stink. In fact, what Raineesh has acquired there is even more notoriety than he

did while in India.

Raineeshpuram seems an unlikely place for a wispy and ailing guru's dream of a 'community to provoke God' to take earthly form. But the city itself has grown dramatically amid the barren brown hills, raising with its very success the fears of many of the residents of the nearby localities that they will all be inundated by the Raineeshees, as the guru's red clad disciples are

called in the USA. The centre of the city is called Jesus Grove. While we were driving towards there, we came upon an intersection lined up with Rajneeshees. It was 2.30 pm, and we were suddenly asked to pull over to the left side of the road. The normal hum of the street gradually ceased. Only the sound of gravel under the approaching car wheels pierced the silence. A gleaming silver grey Rolls Royce slowly turned round a corner. Inside, at the wheel, was the 'Bhagwan' himself, smiling gently and knowingly. He raised his left hand and waved it like a slow pendulum. Replying with contented smiles, the disciples waited for the car to pass. Then they began to celebrate their darshan of Rajneesh. Some giggled, some cried and then caught each other in tight embraces for bouts of kissing.

This is a daily ritual. Each afternoon Rajneesh sets out on a 60 mile
return trip from his home to the town
of Madras in one of his Rolls Royces.
This is the only time the Rajneeshees get to see their ('Bhagwan') because he does not associate
with them anymore. There are no
more discourses, as he has gone into
a period of silence. The only people
he meets are his personal aides and
Ma Anand Sheela, formerly Sheela

Silverman.

In July 1981, a little more than a week after he abandoned his once thriving ashram at Pune for another at Montclair, New Jersey, the Chidvilas Rajneesh Meditation Centre (later renamed Rajneesh Foundation International) bought 64,229 acres of rugged rocky ranchland straddling Wasco and Jefferson counties in central Oregon. They paid six million dollars for the land, and a large part of it in cash. The disciples who followed in handfuls declared that their purpose was purely agricultural. But that was only a cover for the larger purpose: to create a new city.

The scene has considerably changed today. Two thousand acres have been incorporated into a city; in fact, into three little cities linked by roads. There are about 800 disciples living there now, with the avowed goal of setting up a farming commune. Rajneeshpuram grew at a frenzied pace, creating a self-sufficient commune intended to support up to two thousand of Ra-

ineesh's faithfuls.

Even after one-and-a-half years of inhabitation, the Rancho Rajneesh looks like a major construction site. Heavy equipment, bulldozers, graders, dumptrucks, pipes and tractors are busy everywhere. The canyons hum with the activity of the red clad disciples. The hills sprout with the green of the 2,500 acres of winter wheat, planted for the first time in generations in fields wrestled from sagebrush. Scattered about the community are more than 60 mobile homes, each costing 30,000 dollars, a huge cafeteria, barns, warehouses, a



Raineesh in pensive meditation during a therapy session

garage, small outbuildings housing a school and a medical facility. Tucked away into the interiors, is the specially built mobile home for Rajneesh (actually three mobile homes into one), with an adjoining one for the service people and his personal aides. The yard outside the house is landscaped, complete with turf. Inside the home is a solar heated swimming pool. Here the master sits in silence, recuperating from his allergies, asthma and an aching back.

It is hard to believe that so much work has been accomplished so fast. An 88,000 square feet greenhouse, said to be the largest in America, is nearly complete. There are levelled roads planted with several hundred fruit and nut trees. The drainage course has been spotted with small earth dams to check erosion and flooding. Besides the 14 irrigation channels, a massive Krishnamurti dam has been built on the Current Creek. Even the food needed for the commune comes from within the ranch itself: name it and they have it-vegetables, fruits, vineyards, an industrial sized bakery, a poultry farm and an automated dairy for milk and milk products. Future Raineeshpuram plans call for food processing facilities, light manufacturing, a printing press, a sports and recreation complex, a cultural and religious centre, a secondary school, a fully equipped hospital and more.

The 'Bhagwan' has taken no

chances. Every possible eventuality from a nuclear holocaust to a famine is being taken care of within the precincts. Word came down to his disciples from the guru himself that their agricultural oasis could become the perfect shelter from a nuclear war that he says will start in 1993. And preparations must be made, including the construction of caves. According to Rajneesh, in 1984, extreme poverty in the Far East will set off an unprecedented era of international turmoil, and a worldwide nuclear war will begin in a Muslim country in 1993 eventually ending in 1999. The Rancho Rajneesh is located in one of those rare parts of the United States that is a relatively safe distance from any nuclear target, and so the disciples believe that they can wait out the cataclysm in their caves.

Rajneeshpuram already has its own mail service and a police force whose duties are primarily to keep poachers away. The possibility of internal crime in the spiritual commune is not really considered. The city of Rajneeshpuram even has its own graded airstrip and a twinengined airplane. There is no hint of asceticism in the commune. Obviously, one wonders how a man who calls himself a spiritual leader can live like a feudal prince. "But why renounce the world in order to be spiritual?" asks Aja, a German sannyasin, while showing this correspondent around the ranch.

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How the Rajneeshees took over a city

ntelope, the little oasis of green Ain the high descrt in Oregon with a population of little over forty, had never seen so much excitement in its history of 80 years. It was a solace spot for retired folk mainly from Portland and Salem, peaceful and secluded. But everything changed in July 1981 when the Rajneesh Foundation International bought the 64,229 acre ranch near the town. Famous as the Big Muddy for the locale that it offered to John Wayne for his western films, the land which had been neglected, abused and overgrazed for years, became the ideal spot for the Rajneesh commune to set up a farm on and to fulfil their desire of bringing a green revolution.

The ranch quickly became a crowded commune of 300 people that rivalled the ashram Rajneesh had left behind in India, and preparations began for the revitalisation of the long neglected terrain. The activity soon spread into Antelope, to where the Rajneesh Foundation International moved the headquarters of its mail order publications. This along, with an awesome stream of equipment that passed through the town enroute to the ranch, raised eyebrows and questions. The quiet of the place seemed gone forever, as noise from the constant flow of traffic and

construction pervaded the atmosphere. It became a perfect setting for controversy, contention and litigation

litigation. Just four months after the purchase of the ranch, disciples of Rajneesh filed a petition seeking the incorporation of a new townsite in Wasco country and an incorporation election was set up. But the country's action drew several appeals, filed by the Thousand Friends of Oregon, a land-use watchdog organisation and many ranchers in the neighbouring areas. The issue was whether Oregon's strict land use laws, designed to protect agricultural land and limit development to existing urban areas apply to newly incorporated cities like the proposed one. The neighbours were concerned about the impact of the imposition of a city on the rural surrroundings, and they were certain that the Raineesh group's intention was to build a city, not to farm. But attempts to stop the election and to curb other activities of the commune were dismissed by the courts and agencies claiming a lack of

Scores of Rajneesh followers moved into Antelope and assumed control of the town. They took over the local gas station and a restaurant renaming it 'Zorba the Bud-

jurisdiction.

dha.' The Antelope city council feared that added commercial operations sought by the group would overburden the city's already strained capacity to provide key services, such as water and sewer systems. Besides, the Rajneeshees had already bought nine residential houses, a store, a gas station, a restaurant, an office complex and many vacant plots of land. Wary that the commune would next seek to take over the city government, the council set an emergency election to dissolve the city charter, hoping to turn over the town's legal authority to Wasco country. But the measure was defeated by the 55 resident disciples who had registered themselves as voters and the 42 'natives' were outnumbered.

Eventually on 18 May, the commune residents voted unanimously to form the city of Rajneeshpuram on a 2,000 acre portion of the ranch. They were then empowered to have their own police force, a court system and to levy taxes. The city is now also eligible for state and federal revenue sharing funds. Then, after three months, the registered voters of the new city of Rajneeshpuram gathered and elected their first city council of three women and two men, of whom Swami Krishna Deva alias David Knapp became the first mayor.

"This is not a democracy. You are not to be asked what should be done, or what should not be done," Rajneesh himself wrote in Sannyas, the official magazine of the Rajneesh Foundation "If you don't choose that way, you are perfectly happy to leave " No sannyasın has the right to refute what goes on at the commune. Not even contradictions can be questioned. The entire community is vegetarian; they are allowed eggs at the most, but no meat. Yet the cattle being raised on the farm is eventually destined to become someone else's steaks. The official explanation? There's nothing wrong with a vegetarian commune selling beef, this coirespondent was told

Bhagwan's sannyasins smoke cigarettes, drink coffee and there is alcohol to complement meals. However, if any member is caught drinking on his or her own, he or she is thrown out. This actually hap-

pened with one disciple.

The only visitors who are not treated like royalty are those who arrive unannounced and uninvited.
According to a former sannyasin, who is familiar with the inner working of the commune, the Rameeshees devote much of their time



Tight embraces and bouts of kissing

trying to attract wealthy and politically well-connected members to the organisation. While Rajneesh shuns the company of disciples, the exfollower reports that Rajneesh continues to hold meetings with major contributors and others needed to advance the Oregon project.

This explains better the disparity that exists in Rajneeshpuram. If the sannyasin is rich and well-connected, he or she is made the head of a department, while others who have nothing to offer are entrusted with menial jobs. All work for twelve hours a day, from seven to seven Everyone is busy building the new city, and there are no meditation or therapy sessions at the Oregon commune. People who go there in search of free sex and nirvana have to return disappointed; at the moment Rajneeshpuram means only a lot of hard work. In any case, Rajneesh no longer gives discourses or drops those pearls of wisdom which made him famous. If you are really interested, you are welcome to buy one of his innumerable video cassettes.

For those who turn to him for help to purge their repressed desires, he has said more than once, "Never repress it! Never be against it." If it's sex you are repressing, he says, "Go as an explorer. Search all the nooks and corners of your sexuality and you will be surprised and enriched. Knowing your sexuality, one day you will stumble on your

spirituality."

300 miles away from the Rancho Rajneesh, in the heart of the city of Portland, this correspondent witnessed such exploration of sexuality. Blissfully unmindful of the derogatory remarks that the residents of the main city have showered on their master, the Rajneeshees have succeeded in creating the Bhagwan atmosphere in one corner of Portland too. A discotheque called Zorba the Buddha in the centre of the city has become a hot spot for music and sexual celebrations. It is formally open to the general public also, but it is really the haunt of the Rajneeshees. It is bathed in a dim red light, and has a flashy decor, complete with huge mirrors and life-size posters of Rajneesh himself. In fact Rajneesh's pictures are all over-on the ceiling, on the walls and even on the drums. On the dance floor, swinging to a combination of piped music and live bands, were young Rameeshees in high fashion dresses of various shades of red. There was less dancing and more clinging. The petting and fondling often reached brutal levels, but no one seemed to mind

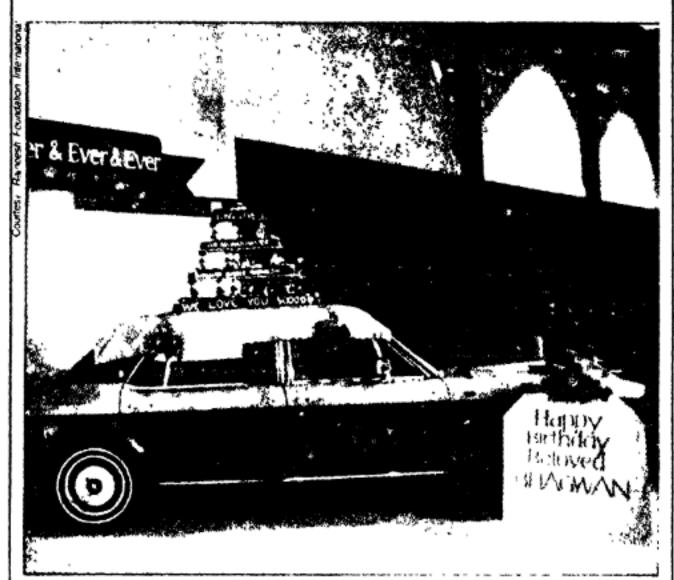
Will Rajneesh be thrown out of the USA?

Given all the intense and elaborate projects that his disciples have chalked out for him, Rajneesh's actual sojourn there is uncertain. The US Immigration Service has suspended the appeal made by his followers on his behalf to let him re main in the United States permanently. Once again there is con-

troversy and litigation.

Rajneesh reached America on a year's tourist visa (he had used the excuse of poor health too), but soon his real intentions became clear. Almost seven months before the expiry of the period, his disciples applied to the US Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) on his behalf to let him remain in the States as a religious worker. Soon after followed another application to the INS with a request to adjust his status from tourist to permanent resident. These two successive petitions started the immigration officials wondering and after a spell of investigation, the petitions were rejected, creating a stir among his disciples all over the world. For them it was a shock announcement, which they splashed dramatically in their official weekly, Rajneesh Times, condemning the government and the agencies.

Master of the Rolls



One of the numerous Rolls Rovces presented to Rameesh on his birthday

They stand in line in front of Rajneesh's magnificent ranch house porch in the 27 Rolls Royces, gleaming and shimmering in the sunlight. Brown, silver grey, black, white, a spread of variety. And for each rising day, 'Bhagwan' chooses the car he drives. He is the master after all and he goes only for the best.

Rajneesh has described himself as a spiritual materialist-one who lives both a rich spiritual life and a rich material one. According to him, only when a man's physical needs are taken care of does a genuine desire for spirituality arise. For Rajneesh, at the moment, the only overt physical need is that of keeping in touch with his body, as a sannyasin told this correspondent. His enlightenment has taken him so far that there are chances of him dying in his sleep, away from his body. Bhagwan experiences everything else through his mind, it is only when he goes out for his long drives that he revives the rapport with his own body.

Once out of view of his disciples who stand in line to 'experience' him, he is said to drive at the speed of 100 miles per hour, and which has twice seen him being hauled out of the sagebrush along the countryside roads. "His philosophy is to move fast in everything, because life is so short," Ma Anand Sheela explained. "But once we

explained the laws to him he understood "Rajncesh's love of luxury also comes from the heart. "The body is a divine thing and should be treated as a divine thing. When technology has given us so much, why should he have anything but a Rolls Royce?"

But the Rolls Royces have raised quite a stir in America. People joke with the disciples, asking them to donate a few, to which of course the Rajneeshees have another profound piece of philosophy to offer: "A human being offers unconditional love and it is not news, the same individual is offered the use of 27 Rolls Royces and the whole nation starts talking about it," read an editorial of the Rajneesh weekly. "Compared to love, a Rolls Royce is nothing. It is a beautiful machine, but only a machine. It can be traded, bought and sold. It can be duplicated yet it is the best way to symbolise the gratitude. There is no other way of repaying Bhagwan's gift. There is no other way of expressing the value of it. Yet we try. To celebrate the glory of love, the beauty of love, the magnificence of love, we are showering Rolls Royces on Bhagwan."

"Americans are mercenary people, they evaluate everything with money and that is why the whole furore," explained Ma Prem Veena. "Look at a Rolls Royce, it is nothing

but tin!"

Finance in the Rajneesh empire

Rajneesh company car rattled Anoisily through the mud and gravel. The bumper sticker on its rear read: "Jesus saves, Moses invests, Bhagwan spends." And so Rajneesh does happily, proudly

and without any scruples.

"We have no sympathy for the poor. We know how to create wealth for us and set an example for others trying to get out of poverty. If we had sympathy for the poor, we'd just get sucked into being poor," says Sheela Silverman, who is an Indian and at the helm of affairs at Raineesh Foundation International. "We work hard and we also spend hard."

The 27 Rolls Royces that stand parked in front of Rajneesh's ranch home confirm what Silverman says. "People make a gift of them (the cars) to Bhagwan," Ma Prem Veena told this correspondent. "He does not own them, they are assets of the Rajneesh Investment Corporation." Well, everyone knows who

uses them.

In any case the Rolls Royce Motors Inc must be delighted at the quick sale of so many of its exclusive cars. Similarly pleased in doing business with the Rajneesh commune are dozens of small and large firms in central Oregon. The commune pays cash down, buys in bulk and is an extremely good customer. The Rajneesh commune claims to have pumped in 40 million dollars into the local economy which has come as a boon during the present recession. It has rescued many business institutions from the verge of bankruptcy and several people from the agony of unemployment. The Rajneesh group administers three interlocking corporations which officially boast of assets of 25 million dollars. Don Latin of the



Raineesh: 'America is the future ot the world'

san Francisco Examiner reported that the entire worth of the empire would total up to 200 million dollars. But when this correspondent asked the press liaison, Ma Prem Veena, about this figure, there was a perturbed silence after which I was asked to concentrate on the ideological aspect of the 'Bhagwan.'

 The parent corporation is the non-profit "church," the Rajneesh Foundation International (RFI)

which has estimated assets of 15 million dollars. The income it generates comes mainly from the brisk business in expensive Rajneesh books, tapes and assorted souvenirs like Rajneesh posters, ashtrays and bottle openers. Besides these sales, it also receives contributions in the form of fees for meditation and therapy sessions from the organisation's 2,50,000 worldwide members. Many sannyasins also contribute money to various Rajneesh projects, now especially to the city, the amounts ranging from 100 dollars to plant and maintain a tree to some individual contributions in excess of 500,000 dollars according to the Rajneesh financiers themselves.

The Rajneesh Investment Corporation, which is the actual owner of the ranch and other real estates in the USA, is a privately held, profit-making subsidiary of RFI, looked after mainly by Swami Prem Jayananda alias John Shelfer who is also the second husband of Sheela Silverman. The third organisation is the commune itself, the Raineesh Neo-Sannyas International Commune (RNSIC) structured as a cooperative in which all the members are partners. This too is a profit-making corporation, leasing the ranch from Rajneesh Investment Corporation, and in turn serves RIC, including the construction of the buildings and equip-

Rajneesh Services International, based in London, provides "financial management services" for 400 loosely connected Rajneesh meditation and therapy centres in the world, which are all separate and tax-exempt corporate entities free to 'donate' funds to the other Rajneesh corporations listed.

Carl Houseman, the deputy director of the Immigration Service in Portland, used Rajneesh's old argument against him and said that owing to his poor health, Rajneesh would not be able to perform his designated role as a religious worker adequately. Rajneesh's silence became another issue, and they could not accept that he had been conducting his duties of a religious teacher while keeping his mouth shut. To add to the problems, Rajneesh had been in the United States on a tourist visa only for five months prior to the application in November 1981, whereas the regulations required that applicants must work as religious teachers for two years before making such an application. The US authorities also alleged that the US Embassy in Bombay had been supplied with "false and misleading

statements" regarding the guru's health in India and the need for medical attention in the USA. Besides, the hush and sudden departure of Rajneesh from Pune and the quick purchase of property in the USA by his followers were clear indications of a preconceived plan and a prior intention to settle in America.

Frustrated, the Rajneeshes were? then left with no other alternative but to search loopholes in the law. They charged US officials of inconsistency, factual inaccuracy and violation of their own rules and regulations. Jeffrey Noles and Swami Prem Niren, the two attorneys of Rajneesh Foundation International, argued over incorrect procedure and indicated a predetermined disposition on the part of the US authorities to deny the petition and application.

And the case was reopened.

While the legal battles are on, "Bhagwan" Shree Rajneesh is living comfortably in his divine enclave, although he should have left the USA by 20 January this year. "And The will stay on forever, as the case is positively ours," said Ma Prem Weena, "we will fight it to the Supreme Court." She was more confident than logical, however. Others point out that it is only a matter of time before Rafneesh is deported back to India.

"Capitalism," Rajneesh had once said, "is basically individualism. It is more than a social structure; it is democracy and freedom... it gives you the freedom to be yourself." And America, he had said, "is the future of the world." It is ironic that the same capitalist America is throwing

out its admirer.

From Sanyas to Playboy



Ma Prem Jnayan: a sannyasin in Rajneesh's commmune

The two most talked about san-L nyasins in Raineesh's commune are women: Shannon Jo Ryan who is now Ma Anirita Pritam and Sylvie Writer, now Ma Prem Jnavan. Shannon Jo Ryan is the daughter of Leo Ryan, a late Peninsula con-

gressman who was gunned down during his investigation into the mystery of the 'People's Temple' in Guyana. He was killed near Ionestown under orders from Reverend Jim Jones, the cult leader who came to worldwide attention when

914 of his followers committed suicide on his instructions. Shannon being the only daughter of her father was a mental wreck after her father's brutal murder, and it was then that she heard of Bhagwan Rajneesh and rushed to India to become his disciple. In Oregon this year, she married another disciple of the master, Swami Anand Subhuti, a former political journalist from England. It is an irony, therefore, that people are now labelling Rajeesh another Jim Jones.

Sylvie Writer, however, has a different story altogether. She belongs to the glamour world of modelling, and is continuing to do so even in the commune. A titillating personality, a cover girl, a sculptress, and now a sannyasin for the past five years. Sylvie grabbed attention recently by granting an interview to the Playboy magazine.

The authorities of the Rajneesh group are proud of such sannyasins, and encourage them to buy as much publicity they can, because in the long run, it brings a reputation for the commune and its bohemian ways.



From Putli to Phoolan

TAVLEEN SINGH went to the ravines of Madhya Pradesh to piece together the history of women dacoits

t was at the wedding of a zamindar's son that he first saw her. She was barely 17 but already among the most famous dancing guls in the Chambal valley. She was known in Agra, Morena, Gwalior and Bhind and they said that she earned more than Rs 200 per mujrah, which in 1950 was a small fortune.

He was an unknown ex-soldier but acknew from the moment he heard her sing that he wanted her more than anyone else in the world. Within months the unknown ex-soldier shot into prominence as Sultan Singh, one of the most dreaded dacorts in the Chambal valley. His gang was considered second only to that of the legendary Man Singh. He continued to be in love with the dancing girl he had seen at the wedding of the zamindar's son.

Puth Bai's tame grew along with Sultan Singh's notoriety and occasionally her tamily heard rumours that he was in love with her but they did not take them too seriously. Her mother, Asghari Bai, was much more concerned with the furtherance of her daughter's career. One evening, some time in the year 1951, Puth Bai was returning from a mujrah somewhere near Dholpur. She was accompanied by her mother, her brother and her musicians. It was a dark,

moonless night and their route home went past the ravines, as did almost all routes in those days. Suddenly, armed men materialised from the shadows, gunshots rang out and the men disappeared into the ravines with their prize. Sultan Singh had got his Putli Bai.

This is chapter one in the life of Putli Bai. If it sounds like a Barbara Cartland novel, Indianised and converted into a B-grade Bombay film, then the fault is that of her life and not my prose. Accounts of how Putli Bai the dancing girl became Putli Bai the Bandit queen vary but they all agree approximately on the beginning. They also agree that Putli Bai is the most famous woman bandit that the Chambal valley has ever seen.

There are those who claim that the ravines of the Chambal have known women dacoits even as long as a hundred years ago, but according to the Madhya Pradesh police records Putli was the first. In Uttar Pradesh, they say there was a woman called Shahnaz who was hanged in Mathura in 1932 and that she committed terrible atrocities on women, but again recorded evidence of this is hard to find.

The anti-dacoity department in Agra is more concerned with the present and said that if old records did exist they are probably buried somewhere in the secretariat in Lucknow. According to them, the most famous (or notorious) woman dacoit in UP has been Phoolan Devi. There was Haseena, who was brutally killed, in an advanced state of pregnancy, in an encounter in 1978, but according to the anti-dacoity department hers' was not a listed gang.

Since the early Seventies, there have been several women who have taken to the ravines in UP and in MP but none of them have been gang leaders and most of them have gone for reasons of love rather than dacoity. If they wear police uniforms and learn to use a gun, it is only because anybody who is on the run in the ravines, had to. Since it is not possible to write a story on women dacoits without including Phoolan, we went first to Gwalior where she is now in jail. I asked about Putli and I was told that the man to talk to was Ganga Sewak Trivedi who was superintendent of police, CID, in charge of anti-dacoity operations for the whole for MP in the days of Pulti Bai. He spent nearly 50 years as a policeman

"You want to know about Putti Bai," he said with a smile. "Well, you know we (the police) were actually responsible for making her a dacoit. We traced her into Sultan's gang hoping that she would give us his head."

in the state.

Mr Trivedi is over 70 and it is now nearly 30 years since Putli Bai was killed but her memory appears to have remained fresh in his mind. The story comes pouring out. Putli Bai was a dancing girl who was particularly renowned for the way in which she sang the alha. These are the local ballads about valour and chivalry and two legendary heroes called Alha and Udhal.

Sultan Singh, "the notorious dacoit," heard her somewhere, possibly at a wedding and fell in love with her. "The year was 1951, she must have been about 18 at the time. Her mother was Asghari Bai. They were residents of Barbai village, Ambah police circle, in Morena district. Her mother and brother were in touch with the record-keeper of the collectorate of Morena, Pandit Rajaram. So we persuaded them to let this girl go and join Sultan's gang and try and bring him into our net."

According to Mr Trivedi, Putli Bai fell in love with Sultan and then refused to betray him. He had been

A view of the Chambal ravines



poisoned by someone during the time she was there and she nursed him and in the process fell in love. "So she came to me about five or six months later and said she had fallen in love and could not betray Sultan but could get us the head of the second-in-command, Babu Lohari. The SP at the time was Deep Singh, and he told me, 'Nothing doing. We must get that gujarr.' She then went back to the gang and wrote me a very nasty letter saying that she would kidnap my children if I tried to do anything to her lover."

Mr Trivedi believes that although Putli went back determined to be an active member of the gang she retained a code of 'modesty and honour' till she was arrested in an encounter with the UP police in Bah. They tortured her and did everything, short of raping her, and then allowed her to return to the jungle after getting an assurance from her that she would liquidate the gang.

"They should never have trusted her after she had betrayed us once. Anyway, when she went back to the gang the second time, she became really cruel and committed many gruesome offences. She was involved in many murders, including mass murders in Bahauli and Katroli."

According to Mr Trivedi, Purli was the first woman dacoit who was famous in the real sense of the word, unlike Phoolen who, he feels, only became famous because of the publicity she got after the Behmai mussacre. Putil had much more sophisticated weapons. She used a sten gun, a Thompson machine carbine and a semi-automatic rifle. In all his years in the police, she was the only weman dacoit he came across. He heard that there was another who had a brief career around the same time as Putli but she was not much of a ducer. He did not even remember her name, he said.

walior jail is a collection of vel-Jlow-washed barracks which sprawl untidily in the shadow of the massive Gwaltor Fort. As we enter the enclosure where the gangs of Phoolan Devi and Malkhan Singh are housed, the first person we meet is Malkhan. He is tall and impressive. He greets me by touching my feet and other members of his gang follow suit. It is compulsory for the gang to touch the feet of all women to indicate that they would never dishonour them. I ask Malkhan if he would ever have considered having women in his gang and he says, "I would never keep a woman or a drunkard in my gang, it's too dangerous." He adds that he does not think women need to become dacoits since if they were being harassed or had some problems they could turn to men for protection. "If a woman came to me with some problem I would try and help her, but I wouldn't let her become a dacoit. It is not the right kind of life for a



G.S. Trivedi, the then SP (CID) in charge of anti-dacoity, MP

woman." Malkhan said he had heard of Putli Bai but in all his years in the ravines he had never allowed women into the gang.

While we are talking. Phoolan emerges from one of the barracks She is a softer, more-relaxed Phoolan than we had seen at the surrender. She is wearing a pink nylon sari, a silver kamarband (belt), silver anklets and bangles. There is no trace of the abusive, wild woman we had met during the surrender. She invites us into her small, bare room. A couple of tin trunks and a small suitcase he piled up in a corner and there are

mattresses on the floor. She says she is quite happy and being well-looked after but for the fact that her family is being put up in a dharmasala and cannot return to their village and her brother has not been given the job that the police promised would be one of the conditions of the surrender.

I bring her on to the subject of women dacoits by mentioning that there is talk that Kusuma Nain will be surrendering shortly to the UP police Kusuma was once in the same gang as her. It was in fact, she who gave Vikram Mallah chloroform and assisted Lalaram-Sriram in killing him, Phoolan says. Kusuma Nain became a dacoit of her own accord and ran away with someone called Madho Singh. She later took up with Sriram and is still a member of their gang According to Phoolan, she is around 22 and very pretty.

Did she remember any other women dacoits? "I heard the name of Geeta Thakur and there was a Munni Bai. Then there was Meera Thakur, whom the police killed. She was such a nice girl, so shy, that she was almost too frightened to talk. And there is Maya Devi who now owns a paan ki dukan (betel shop) in Orai."

Phoolan said that most women became dacoits either because they were kidnapped, like she was, or because of harassment of one kind or another. There were very few like Kusuma Nain, who came into the jungle willingly. Meera Thakur had been driven away from her village

Putli Bai's brother, Alladin, showing the photograph of Putli's daughter, Tarveen Banoo



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A file photograph of Puth Bai (left) and Babu Lohari (right) killed in an encounter in 1958

because there were some Muslims who were harassing her. Maya also became a dacoit because there were some people harassing her. Phoolan smiled when I asked her if she had ever heard of Putli Bai. "I heard about her after I became a dacoit. All I know is that she was also a dacoit." She did not seem to think that life in the ravines was any more difficult for women than it was for men. "It's a very hard life," she said, "it's hard for men and it's hard for women."

Phoolan does not conceal the pleasure she gets from having made a name for herself, nor does she consider it strange that she should have been the leader of the gang If Indira Gandhi can do it, she has pointed out in a widely-quoted remark, why should she not be able to head a gang. The gang's acceptance of her as a leader also seems to be unquestioned, although it is clear that decision-making was something that she and Man Singh did (and still do) together.

In the case of both Phoolan and Putli, leadership was something they inherited. Putli, when Sultan was killed, is believed to have taken up with another gang member, Babu Lohari, and after his death, with Kalla. She and Kalla were then coleaders of the gang. In Phoolan's case, she has been with Man Singh since the death of Vikram, but Man Singh has never been more than a co-leader, even if he is, in fact, as much a leader as she is.

The status of the women appears to be linked entirely to the position their lovers held. If the men they have been with are well above the other members of the gang, then their status becomes different. If, however, the status of the man is not clearly in the top rungs, then the woman becomes just another ordinary member of the gang. Most gangs in the Chambal valley have one or two women members who wear police uniforms and are armed like 24

the men, but their position is, in fact, that of mistresses to the men.

Putli Bai, according to most accounts, also proved that she could use a gun and loot and kill as well as any other dacoit could. Where Phoolan is concerned, however, the position is not completely clear. Police sources say that she has, in fact, admitted that of the 21 men killed in Behmai in February 1981, she killed two and the rest were shot dead by Man Singh and Raghunath Mallah.

To me, however, she emphatically denied that she had ever been to Behmai. She said she had been very upset by press reports that said she had been locked up for nearly six weeks by Lalaram and Sriram and repeatedly raped. This was completely untrue, she said. Her version is that after Vikram Mallah was killed by Lalaram and Sriram, they took her to a village called Simra where they intended to kill her. There she was rescued by some pandit after which she fled back into the jungle to meet Man Singh. She said the pandit was still alive and there

Madho Singh, the then DSP, Bhind



were other people in the village who would swear that she had been there and not in Behmai. The entire legend of Phoolan Devi has been built around the Behmai massacre; it is the only major crime she is supposed to have committed.

If she can prove that she was never in Behmai then she becomes merely a petty dacoit who made very little money and was responsible for little more than a few minor kidnappings and daconies. The police believe that she is denying the Behmai massacre because she realises that she will then get away with a much lesser sentence. They claim that there are enough witnesses to testify that Phoolan was raped and brutalised by Lalaram-Sriramand that the Behmai massacre was her way of taking revenge

When she was talking to me I got the feeling that she was also trying to prove that she had only two lovers-Vikram and Man Singh-and that she was therefore not as "bad charactered" as everyone had made her out to be. She was very upset by allegations that before Vikram she had also been with Baba Gujar, who was the leader of the gang which first kidnapped her, and that he stripped her in public and raped her often.

"This is absolute rubbish," she said, "I was with Vikram right from the start and after hun there's only been Man Singh." It appears that middle-class morality and a hunger tor respectability pervades even the life in the jungles of the Chambal. A part of her desire to cling to some kind of respectability is justified by the widespread belief among the police that traditionally it is only prostitutes and women of "bad character" who take to the ravines.

Tadho Singh, who as deputy su-IVI perintendent of police, Bhind, was one of the police officers involved in the encounter in which Putli was killed, said, "The women these gangs visit are generally prostitutes. Putli Bai and Bijli were both prostitutes. Phoolan was not but she got involved with dacoits because of her character."

Mr Singh, who now lives in retirement in Gwalior remembers Putli Bai as having been a very beautiful woman. "Short, slim, fair-skinned with big eyes, long hair and nice features," and a famous singer. According to him she was already deeply involved with Sultan Singh when the police decided to use her to infiltrate the gang. But she was in love with him and became an active member of the gang instead. Said he, "She was an extremely cruel and much-hated woman. After Sultan's death, when she was with Kalla; they would raid a village and she would be responsible for looting the houses. She used to tie kerosene-soaked bandages on the fingers of the village women and threaten to

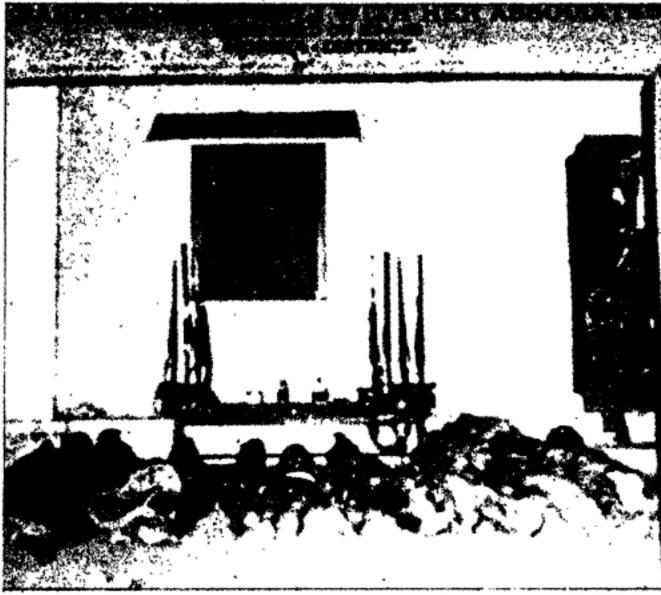
set them on fire unless they told her where the jewellery and valuables were." She did a lot of killing herself and was said to have been a crackshot. She was wounded in an encounter and lost her left arm which had to be amoutated

Madho Singh remembers Putli's death on 23 January 1958, vividly. She was killed near Sehonia in Morena district. She had walked into a trap set for Lakhan Singh, who had once been an ordinary member of Sultan's gang. Sultan was killed on 5 May 1955, and Babu Lohari barely a few months later on 6 September of the same year After that Putli Bai had become co leader of the gang with Kalla

Kalla and she walked into the trap together but he somehow managed to escape. "She had tried to escape by crossing a river (Kunwari) but we shot her when she came out into the village. She had taken her trousers oft and was in a shirt and underwear. I talked to her before she died, I asked her where Kalla was and she told me he had gone. I also asked her about her amputated arm but she was dying fast and couldn't tell me."

The only other woman dacou that Macho Singh remembers was Bijli who was also a donoing girl and operated at the same time as Putli. She was, however, fairly small-time and faded into obscurity soon. What Mi Singh remembers most about her is the reply she gave him when he as led her why she had become an outlaw. She had said, "Sahib aap nahin they is live bhaag gayi. Aap hi for to main aapkey saath chan is at (You weren't there so I can aw iy. Had I met you first I would have gone with you."

In Morena they have photographs of Kamla, Munni Bai and Bacchi, but tew details other then the fact that Bacchi was killed and Kamla and Munni Bai have now given up crime. They operated for a while as mem-



From the records. A police photograph of Puth Bar and her associates killed in an encounter in 1958

bers of the Ram Babu Puran Singh gang in Ambah district. Agam we are told that the only real woman dacont has been Puth Yellowing records and sepia photographs are produced. a close-up of her face in death (there are no known pictures of her alive) and another of her lying dead with eight of her gang Displayed in the photograph are the guns and animunition the police found as well as a few poignant reminders that this was a woman's gang-soap, powder, a little hair oil and a mirror. On yellowing paper, there is a report on Puth written some case in 1957.

shortly before she was killed. It describes her as "a woman of short stature, wheat complexion and unattractive features, with slanting eves "It describes how she was on "a professional contract" in the erstwhile state of Dholpur when she was caught by Sultan Singh and how she stayed with the gang for six months, then returned to try and live a peacefu! life in Morena, but how after a few months she returned to the gang leaving behind her ten year-old daughter, Munni. The report even mentions the possibility that the police had sent her back as an informer. It mentions her arrest in UP and her release on bad on 26 May 1953, on the grounds that she wanted to infiltrate the gang and be an intormer. She returned to the gang and never came back.

The only member of Puth Bai's immediate family who is still alive apart from her daughter now in Calcutta (see interview) is her brother, Alladin, He lives in Morena beside a small green-washed mosque that has been built by Puth's daughter Tarveen Banoo, whom she called Tanno. Alladin supplies to us the final pieces in the reconstruction of Puth's life. He is a tall, thin man with broken yellow teeth who would have been eight years older than Putli had she still been alive. She was a wonderful singer, he says. She was only 16 and was already earning Rs 200 per munah when she was kidnapped by Sultan. He remembers that they were returning after a mujrah in Rajasthan but does not

Dacoit Kanakshree with her lover Nahar Singh; now living a peaceful life



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remember the exact place or year, when she was abducted by Sultan's men. He also confirms that Sultan had first heard her sing in a baraat (marriage). "After six months she came back to Morena. She was pregnant and she was sick with her life in the ravines. She wanted to stay but the police wouldn't let her. They drove her back into the jungle," Alladin told me. Putli gave birth to her daughter and never saw her again. Today she is about 32 years old and lives in Calcutta with her hotelier husband and three children. Alladin brought her up as his own daughter and she did not find out till she was an adult that she was the daughter of Putli Bai and Sultan Singh. Ironically it is not Putli's daughter but Alladın's who has inherited the family gift of singing. Shakeela Banoo has studied classical music and often sings on AIR, Bhopal. Puth's brother said the police were lying when they said she had been a cruel woman who tortured and killed. "She was so soft-hearted that she used to loot money and distribute it to the poor. I'm a man who says namaz five times a day and I wouldn't lie," he told me.

part from Putli and Phoolan, the Aonly other woman gang leader has been Haseena who was killed by the UP police in Lalitpur on 26 May 1978. Little is known about her except that she was a very beautiful woman who had a short, insignificant career of about eight months. It is her tragic, brutal death that has really made her so well-known. It is believed that she had, in fact, surrendered and begged the police not to kill her because she was pregnant but they shot her anyway. Her naked body was then displayed in public. After Putli's death many years passed before any woman dacoits rose in the Chambal valley. Then suddenly since the Seventies there have been a spate of them, mainly on the UP side of the border. At the moment the UP police know of the existence of at least three women dacoits. Apart from Kusuma Nain, there is Geeta Thakur who is with the gang of Vinoda which operates in Etawah, Mainpuri and Agra. It is said that Vinoda became an outlaw because of her and since she joined him they have been together. She was said to have been married to somebody else. Then there is the gang of Kamoj in Rajasthan which also has a woman. She is believed to beat up her victims with bicycle chains and has, therefore, been named Kapoori Chainwali. There are, however, several minor ex-women dacoits who have served sentences and are now living in retirement in the Chambal area. There is Munni Thakur (Gori Munni) who is said to have become a dacoit after having her husband killed because he ill-treated her. She operated for a while with the Captan gang, served a sentence in Dholpur



A file photograph of the dacoit Kumla Bai

Jail and has now given up crime. There was another Munni too, called Kali Munni in Dholpur jail to distinguish her from Gori Munni, who they said was bought by some prostitutes. She refused to become a prostitute and chose to become a dacoit instead. She has also served her sentence and is now living as the common-law-wife of Bengali, one of the members of the gang she was with. In a village, near Dholpur, we met

A file photograph of Munni Bai



Janakshree who became a dacoit because she fell in love with her father-in-law's younger brother who had become an outlaw due to a land dispute with his family. Janakshree and Nahar Singh (Nahara) now live a life of rural tranquillity in a village called Kanakia, near Raja Kheda. It is accessible only by foot and involves a walk of nearly five miles from the main road. They have buffaloes and a house which is semi-pucca and do not miss the old days at all. The only reminder of the past is a gun, which they have to keep because they still have enemies. Jankashree, who has two grown-up children by her first husband, says that she is very happy not to be on the run any more. She is a tall, strapping woman who weiled a gun like a man but according to her, she never killed anyone. "I used to use a Mark-4" she said, "and I faced police bullets just like any man but I'm glad it's over. This is a much better life." She was caught in 1975 and spent six years in jail.

There are other names that one hears—Begum Bashira, Saleema, Sheila and Phoolshree—and other women dacoits who operated over a hundred years ago, but in the end only two names stand out: Putli Bai

and Phoolan Devi.

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'I don't know if Phoolan surrendered or the MP police surrendered'

Putli Bai's daughter, Tarveen Banoo, told SUNDAY

Tarveen Banoo, 34, is said to be the absolute image of her mother, Putli Bai Small, slight, with open hair and wearing a printed silk sarée, she seems light years away from the life her mother lived in the Chambal ravines. Pulti Bai's daughter lives with her businessman-huband and three teenaged children in a large joint family household in Calcutta's Bowbazar. Tarveen Banoo spoke with common sense and without reticence about her mother, dacoits, and her life today, in an interview to Ranjana Sengupta.

O: Do you remember your mother?

A Hardly. I was just eight years old when she died. Anyway I was brought up by my grandparents and was living with them in Morena even before she died. I do remember being taken to see her once in the Chambal. I went with my grandparents and my uncles—this was just before she died. I can't recall what she looked like—I'm told I look exactly like her. I was at the Ajmer Urs when she was killed. I never saw her body.

Q: What do you feel about her?
A: Well, she was my mother, but I don't think what she did was right. Today everyone glamourises dacoits, films are made about them, you press people keep writing about them. They kill and ruin many people and then surrender to the chief minister and everyone takes

photographs (of the event). I don't know what punishment they will be given, but I don't think it's right. Both my parents were dacoits. My father captured my mother and eventually she fell in love with him and married him and was forced in a way to live his kind of life.

My mother was always a tomboy. In those days each house in the area had a rifle, everyone kept horses. I've been told that my mother loved riding and her favourite toy was the rifle! But I don't think women become dacoits out of shauk (fancy). It's because of circumstances. It was true of my mother, too.

Q: Were you never attracted by the romance of this life?

A. When I was a child, I wanted to be like my parents—all children do. But children have no sense of right and wrong. I have respect for my parents, but I'm not saying that what my mother did as a dacoit was good. She is famous, I suppose a glamourous figure. After all people are famous for either the good things or bad things they do.

Q: Then you don't support the image of dacoits as Robin Hood figures?

A: If someone has money and you kill that person and distribute the gains to the poor, what's the good of that? Even the poor would not give such dacoits *izzat* (respect). They would accept the money out of fear, not hamdardi (sympathy). I would also like to help people, but not at the cost of others. Anyway people

become dacoits because of local reasons, quarrels over land, things like that, not because they want to be good.

Q. What do you think about dacoits like Phoolan Devi and Malkhan Singh, who surrender?

A. Dacoits have ruined and killed many people. They have terrified many people Now Phoolan Devi says she wants to surrender and there is a great fuss being made about her I don't know if she surrendered or it the MP police surrendered. She will be kept (in (ail) very well, with all soits of facilities. My grandmother tried so hard to make my mother surrender, but my mother said what was the point; she would be hanged Today, it is all different. All right, Phoolan is very young, her lite is before her. But will she change? Can people really change? Once you are on the wrong road it is very difficult to reform. I don't know how long she will be in jail. I suppose the best thing will be for her to marry and go somewhere where no one knows, her past. She must have been 16 when she became a dacoit.

Q. Do you think then that women should be educated, become independent, and avoid being misled?

A: I think women should be educated because if. God forbid, anything happens to their husbands. they will be able to stand on their own feet. You can't always depend on men I was married off very early. My grandparents were very old and they wanted me to settle down. I have not studied beyond matric. After marriage, it's difficult to continue (studying). My daughters (14 and 12) are studying at school. My husband says they are not going to work, so what's the point of studying? But I think they should study till they get married.

Q: Has being Putli Bai's daughter ever been a source of embarrassment to you? **

A: Not really. Even in Morena—I often go back there, I have a house there—people see me and say, 'There's Putli Bai's daugnter' They don't mean it disrespectfully. My children are quite indifferent. Of course press people are interested! And here, in a city like this, who remember's who is who's mother?

larveen Banoo: 'I hardly remember my mother'



A conclave of Ramas

The non-Congress(I) CMs of the south—Ramachandran of Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu's MGR, Ramakrishna Hegde of Karnataka and NTR of Andhra—recently got together at Bangalore and released what is now known as the "R" document (named after the four Ramas). The CMs have demanded the sharing of net resources of the nation. Is the formation of the southern CMs council going to lead to confrontation with the centre?

ANITA PRATAP from Madras and SHUBHA SINGH from Hyderabad report on the implications of the meeting.

a north-south confrontation brewing closer home? The four southern chief ministers (of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu. Karnataka and the union territory of Pondicherry) who met at Bangalore on 20 March have spared no efforts to reiterate that then conclave should not be misconstrued as a manifestation of a deep-rooted conflict with the centre. This, however, has not minigated the tears of the centre which is suspicious of the southern CM's council. New Delhi and the semor Congress(1) leaders are formenting themselves with visions of the tour southern CMs cantering away from the mother, licing a life of their own, taking their own decisions and making their own mistakes. Will the four CMs, (M.G. Ramachandran, N.F. Rama Rao, Ramakrishna Hegderand R Ramachandra) all significantly or coincidentally named after the epic hero in the Ramávana, wage a 20th century battle against the centre? Perhaps, for many in New Delhi are of the opinion that the southern CMs' conclave is enough to set off a chain of events that could culminate in the tragmentation of the country. along the Vindhyas.

There are two very striking aspects to the conclave uselt. One is that prior to the actual meeting. there was no publicity. It was only on 20 Lebruary, when Mr Ramakrishna liegde, Karnataka chief minister. had gone to Hyderabad that an announcement was made about the southefu chief ministers' intention to form a forum to thrash out some common problems. Even then the newspaper reports devoted only a ten paragraphs to this announcement. Subsequently, not a word was heard about the conference. The chief ministers sprang a surprise, when on 19 March the public was suddenly informed that the meeting was to be held the next day in Bangalore. It was not the intention of the CMs to meet clandestinely. It was more out of a necessity to keep the plans a secret because too much publicity prior to the meeting would have needlessly sensationalised the issue, jeopardising the whole venture before it even got going

The second aspect of the meeting was that despite the singular lack of fanfare, the entire conference was the end-result of meticulous planning and preparation. The meeting of the chief secretaries of three states and the union territory, held on 19 March as well as the conference of the CMs on 20 March went off without a hitch Apart from this, a public reception was organised for NTR, which not only went off smoothly but attracted huge crowds.

despite the short notice

The conclave saw the emergence of Ramakrishna Hegde as a toil to Mrs Gandhi and an enhancement in his prestige for organising the conterence. Yet while Mr Hegde is being telicitated for his moves, everyone seems to have forgotten that it was not Mr Hegde but Tamil Nadu CM MGR who first mooted the idea of holding such a conclave in January 1983. In fact, MGR's suggestion ch cited a negative response from Mr Hegde in the beginning, On 13 January ary when Mr Hegde met Mr Chandra Shekhar during the padavatra at frivandrum, he had declared that he would "not like to insist on a recast ing of centre state relations now because the Constitution had ample provisions for state autonomy "I ven when he was asked it he was in tayour of non-Congress(I) CMs form ing a joint forum, he had replied in the negative, asserting "Such an actempt might smack of an organised move against the centre. But he warned that "if there is any attempt to discriminate against the state gov ernment just because it is a non-Congress(I), government, it (the move) will be tought " Commenting on the southern CMS (council, Mc N L. Rama Rao told SUNDAY . The states are an integral part of India and the people of the states are children of the motherland for a strong and healthy body (the centre) the limbs (the states) should be strong. The question of being against

the centre does not arise."

The non-cooperation that Hegde had to contend with could have kindled the Karnataka CM's defence mechanism to adopt a protective

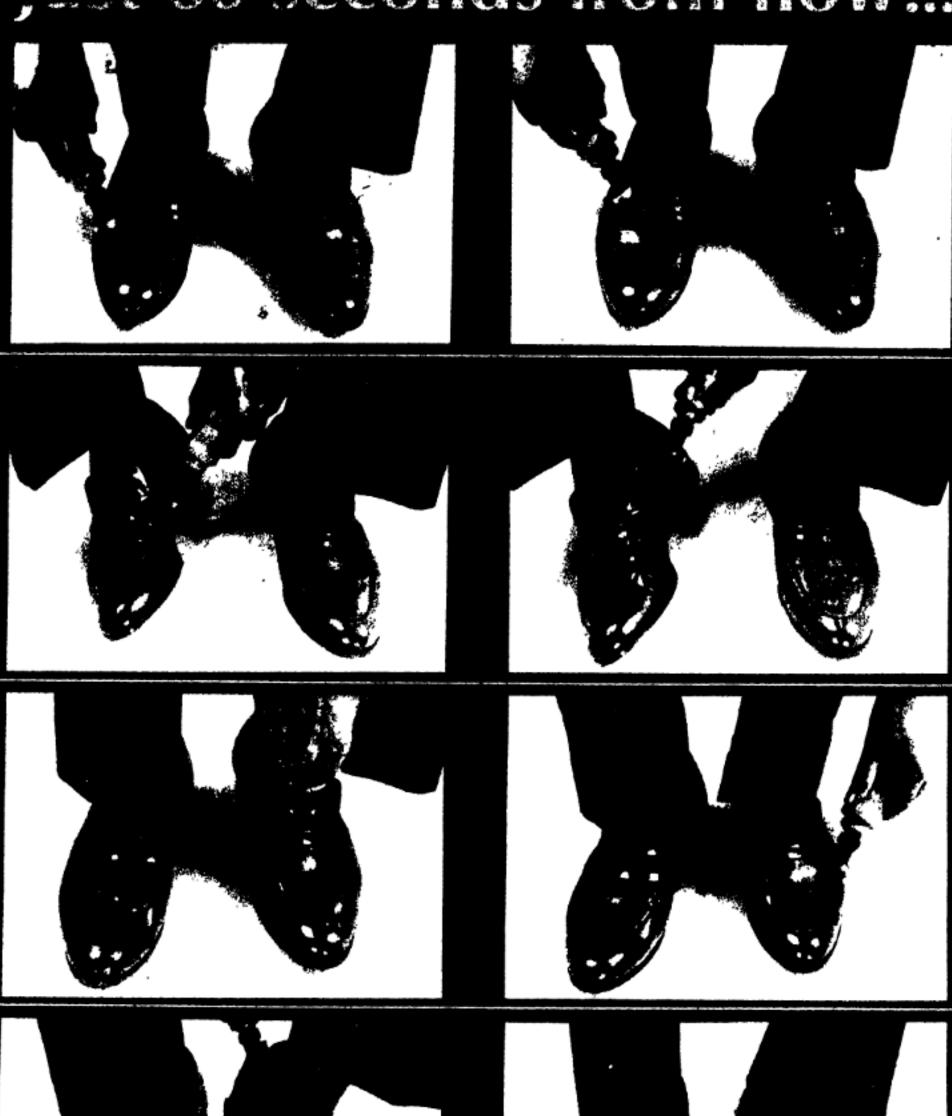
armour to be shared by all non Congress(I) CMs since the en gineered threats and problems that they faced were more or less identic al. Another reason that could have impelled Mr Hegde is that the by elections are around the corner and his image could do with a facelift. It may be pointed out that Hegde has been defeated at the hustings before A defeat now at a byelection as CM of Karnataka spells disaster for the man and his party. The conclave served as an opportunity to project himself with a returbished image. After all the conclave has been a resounding success, welcomed by all except the Congress(1). And Mr Hegde deserves every bit of praise that is coming his way It is also conjectured that Mr Hegde, the able administrator and the intelligent politician, views the regional conclave as a springboard to catapult himself to the national mainstream Knowing the hostility and problems that they would have to face in future if the four Ramas decided to torm a torum of non-Congress(1) CMS, Mr Hegde made it a point to publicise his invitation to Mi K. Karimakaran, Kerala CM. It was made clear to all that Mr Karunakaran was not deliberately kept out of the meet. As for Karunakaran he was instructed by the high command not to put his foot in and join the band

Would it be a forum where a genuine effort would be made to settle states' problems and stream line administration or would it be a no holds barred controntation with the centre (Mrs. Gandhi, in other words)? Mr. Karimakaran teigoed ministerial: quarantine - that he could not leave Trivandium as the Assembly was in session: a lame excise indeed, for the conclave was held on a Sunday. As it turned out, the atrans and proceedings of the conclave were shrewdly managed.

At the conclave the southern CMs have called for the establish ment of a platform for the states to tackle their common problems. They have studiously steered clear of any decision, that can be construed as

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even vaguely "political." It is superb strategy again. The CMs applied their minds to the formulation of sound administrative and legislative principles, the most important of which was the drastic changes demanded in the centre-state relations. The irrepressible actor in NTR compelled him to make an emotional issue of the conclave which he described as "a meeting of brothers." A noteworthy aspect of the CMs'meet was the total avoidance of rhetoric, cliches and high-sounding and populist exhortations. Instead, the CMs meticulously threw up concrete, tangible, precise and practical suggestions.

The most important offshoot of the conclave is the formation of a council of southern CMs intended to promote the concept of "cooperative federalism." The CMs reiterated that the purpose of the conclave was purely to chalk out a common memorandum before the Eighth Finance Commission and that the summit was not a camouflage for "ganging up" against the centre. An important recommendation of the council is that the centre should appoint a fiscal commission with adequate representation for the states and conferring statutory powers to review centre-state fiscal relations in the light of the experience of the past 35 years. It was suggested that the committee should recommend enactments and amendments to the Constitution for a more equitable distribution of resources between the centre and the state. The CMs pointed out a gamut of constitutional provisions that could begin with a re-examination of administrative regulations under Article 256 and 257 of the Constitution and legislative powers including redrafting of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution.

The CMs mooted that legislatures

should have powers to enact laws in the State List and Concurrent List (when states are the first to legislate on the subject) without the need to get the President's assent.

That the council chose to highlight the need to reorient Article 256 and 257 of the Constitution vindicates their claim that it is not a plot being hatched by non-Congress(I) CMs. These two articles have traditionally been the bete noire of CMs all over the country. Article 256 and 257 empower "the union executive to issue directives to the state governments to ensure that the latter comply with and do not impede or prejudice the laws of the union or the union executive in the exercise of its authority."

The Rajamannar Committee instituted by former Tamil Nadu chief minister, Mr M. Karunanidhi in 1969. that studied the "kind of relationship that should subsist between centre and state" points out that "there is further provision for visitation of grave consequences on a state for failure to carry out such directives. Article 265 entitles the powers of the state government concerned. There was no provision in the draft Constitution for securing compliance with directives issued under Article 256 and 257. It was only at a later stage that Article 365 was inserted in the Constitution. Article 365 highlights the subordinate position of the state." Can one charge the Ramas for jointly taking up these issues?

The 11-point consensus on centrestate financial relations urges the transfer of a bulk of financial resources to the states on a statutory basis and not on a discretionary basis as is in vogue. Urging a change in the existing Gadgil formula for Central plan allocation, the CMs' council has suggested the devolution of resources in such a manner that these transfers should not only help back-

ward states but also the more advanced states so that their progress was not impeded. Taxes under Article 269 of the Constitution should be levied with a view to providing substantial additional resources to the states. The CMs were also critical of the revised overdraft restrictions which put the states that had effectively managed its finances at a disadvantage. It was also opined that the debt burden of the states could be reduced by decreasing the loan component of central assistance. The prices of agricultural produce should be fixed by the state government in consultation with farmers' organisations, the CMs said.

The council of CMs today have four members. Its doors have been thrown open to the CMs of all the states so as to ultimately establish a national forum for mutual understanding. Non-Congress(I) CMs, like Mr Jyoti Basu of West Bengal and Farooq Abdullah of Jammu and Kashmir, are likely to be immediate entrants. Secretly, all the CMs, even the Congress(I) ones, would like to be associated with this council which is striving to pave the way for an easier and efficient style of state administration.

Deople bent on attributing political motives to the meeting of the non-Congress(I) CMs have questioned the prudence of the CMs in forming a council to review certain administrative and economic norms which fall under the jurisdiction of the National Development Council (NDC) or the Zonal Councils (ZC) of CMs and the Planning Commission. These detractors point out that the forum is a move towards duplication of functions. But the southern CMs are of the view that the existing councils are practically speaking, "central agencies" that do not provide sufficient avenues for the states to ventilate their points of view. Says

The four southern CMs pose for a photograph (from left to right)Pondicherry CM Ramachandran, Tamil Nadu's MGR, Karnataka's Ramakrishna Hegde and Andhra's NTR: challenge to the centre?



Mr Hegde, "The NDC hardly meets and if it does it is predominantly a central forum where states do not get adequate opportunity to express their views. What the CMs have said have hardly served any purpose. As for the ZCs, they meet only at the convenience of the union home minister." Though technically the ZCs are empowered to make recommendations on matters of importance such as border disputes, linguistic minorities and distribution of inter-state river waters, the ZCs have so far been relegated to enunciate mere formalities that are of no import. Though the central government has passed several resolutions to reactivate the ZCs nothing has ever been done to set them going again. At the same time it must be pointed out that neither have the CMs shown any initiative in making the ZCs a worthwhile body. If they had, the centre would not have been pestered to keep interfering in inter-state disputes. The CMs have, however, found the presence of the union home minister stultifying. On scrutinising the issues raised at the conclave, one can perceive trends of a "centre vs.state" stand. This is more in evidence than an emphasis on a state-to-state relationship. Hardly any mention is made of some very important inter-state problems and issues. It is strategic for the council to have adopted in this focus an

omnibus attempt to tackle state-tostate as well as centre-state relations or to solely thrash out inter-state problems which could have entailed decisions of divergence threatening the very foundation of a united council. The southern CMs' meeting would then have culminated in a wrangling of the Ramas. The dominance of the centre is an albatross weighing down all the states. It is possible to arrive at a consensus if the subject under scrutiny is centrestate relations. And unity is vital to sustain the tempo of the movement. This is why issues like the sharing of river waters and power or movement of foodgrains were studiously eschewed. In this context it is significant that the council did not press for the activisation of Article 263 of the Constitution,

As the consensus of the conclave was restricted to administrative and economic matters, the centre cannot cavil at the CMs' intention. This is more so when the NDC and ZC have not been functioning satisfactorily As for the Planning Commission, its role was put in perspective way back in 1969 by Dr Subba Rao who, while delivering the Lal Bahadur Shastri memorial lecture stated: "The Planning Commission constituted in India functioned in violation of the provisions of the Constitution. Thatis possible because the party was in power in the centre and the states. It

had grown in prestige by its intimate connection with important cabinet ministers of the centre and by its control of the nation's economy. Over the years it has developed into a super cabinet...the centre through the Planning Commission controlled not only the state sector of the plan but also their implementation."

It is too early to say whether the southern CMs will achieve anything tangible ultimately. But credit goes to them for the concretisation of a concept. One fervently hopes that the four CMs will purposefully remain above the rut of party and parochial considerations to protect the council from fizzling out. The only way they can nurture this historic movement so that it results in the flowering of "cooperative federalism" in the country is by a constant display of dynamism, intelligence and unity. In this context it is heartening to observe that the DMK chief minister of Pondicherry and the AIADMK chief minister of Tamil Nadu have displayed unique solidarity. As Ramakrishna Hegde says, "It is not a conspiracy against anyone." At the same time he himself concedes: "If the southern states come together no force can shake them." The whole nation is keenly watching the stirring of a movement in the south. Ramas of the Deccan unite, you have nothing to lose but the apronstrings.

'Southern CMs' forum is no challenge to the centre'

Sunday asked some national leaders of the ruling party as well as the opposition for their views on the formation of the council of southern chief ministers and the Sarkaria commission. Their replies:

C.M. Stephen (general secretary, All India Congress Committee-I): If you ask me about my reaction to the meeting of the four chief ministers in Bangalore. I would say that prima facie there is nothing in it. It is just four chief ministers meeting and discussing what they consider to be their common problems. Taken in isolation, it is not a major event to get excited about or to take note of because it was an informal thing.

But looking at it a little more closely, certain questions arise, which those chief ministers alone can explain. If they wanted to discuss their common problems, then there already exists a zonal council, which was set up under the States' Reorganisation Act. There are five such zonal councils, the southern council is one of them. So, they could have asked the central government to call a meeting of the southern zonal council. That was the constitutional forum available to them.



Stephen: 'The formation is distancing from the centre'

Again, if there is a centre-state conflict or a conflict between two states, or a group of states and the centre, there is a constitutional provision for the convening of an interstate council. So, apart from the zonal councils, there is yet another constitutional forum which could be available to these four chief ministers

Why did they resort to this meeting? What was the nature of the conference they called? It was not meant to be a non-Congress(I) meeting. If it were so, then the Kerala chief minister. Mr Karnnakaran would not have been invited. They invited him. It is another matter that he did not feel it fit to participate in such a meeting. If this was supposed to be a non-Confress b meeting, then the crief minister of West Bengal I minu one to their and Tripure in late have by a called They were a forested So this excluded the non-Congressal haet

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ministers of the north and the east and included the Congress(I) chief minister of the south. Thus, we have to presume that it is not a non-

Congress(I) meet.

It is not a meeting of the states versus the centre either. Had it been so, then they should have invited all the states. All this points to one thing—the attempt was to call together a meeting of the chief ministers on a regional basis, outside the forum of the Constitution and the law. And they said that they would keep a "respectable distance" from the centre. So, it was a gangingup of the states of a particular region, with a clear declaration of wanting to keep a "respectable distance from the centre.

The clear meaning of this postulate is regional combination and distancing away from the centre. In plain words, it is a thrust for disintegration, a thrust against the administrative unity and the constitutional integrity of the country.

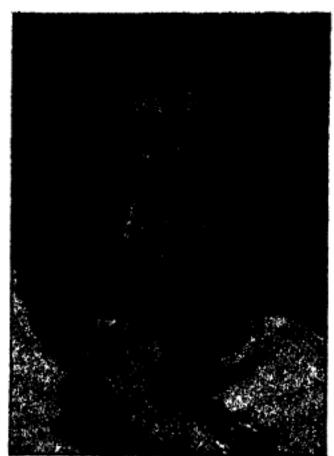
Going into the question of centrestate relations, Mrs Gandhi has indicated that there is nothing new in their demands. We believe in changing the relations between the centre and the states in accordance with the changes in the situation. The Sarkaria commission has been set up with this in view.

K.P. Unnikrishnan (MP and general secretary of the Congress-S): The appointment of Justice Sarkaria as a one-man commission to examine the question of centre-state relations within the "existing constitutional framework" announced by the Prime Minister in both houses of Parliament, is a highly inadequate response to a constitutional situation which can escalate into a crisis at

any time.

The existing constitutional framework and provisions are highly unsatisfactory. It is not only the AIADMK DMK movements in Tamil Nadu or the CPI(M) in West Bengal, and Akalis in Punjab who are demanding a restructuring of the union and states relations, a large number of objective observers of the Indian scene want such a reappraisal, and that requires a close look at the Constitution and the problems in general, by a distinguished panel of jurists, economists, historians, etc. This will undoubtedly turn our Contitutions into a federal instrument so that our unity and integrity can be

The recent formation of the council of the chief ministers of the southern states is a reflection of the need to have a closer look on unionstate relations. The very fact that three chief ministers of the populous southern states found it necessary to have a common forum or a pressure lobby, is indicative of the highly complex manner in which the unionstate relations have developed in



Unnikrishnan: 'Existing constitutional framework is unsatisfactory'

recent years. It has also been further aggravated by the attitude of the Congress(I) to charge any regional party or force with secessionist tendencies.

Subramaniam Swamy (MP, Janata Party): When the three non-Congress chief ministers of the southern states agreed to consult together and formulate joint action in matters concerning centre-state relations, there was consternation in some circles. The Congress(I) functionaries promptly denounced it as a secessionist-prone move. Others came to the support of the idea of a 'southern council.' The three chief ministers, however, neither constituted a secessionist threat as the critics said nor a viable regional bargaining front as the supporters claimed.

In the first place, the CMs of Karnataka, Andhra and Tamil Nadu cannot constitute a "southern council" because Kerala is excluded. It cannot be an anti-Congress(I) force because MGR, when the chips are down, will not challenge Mrs Gandhi... as long as she is the Prime Minister. This is because he is quite vulnerable to the strong arm tactics

of the centre.

Mrs Gandhi reacted with speed (or panic?) but without wisdom. What was the need for her to set up a commission to review centre-state relations? The terms of reference of the commission emasculates it. The commission is to function within the framework of the present Constitution and not beyond the economic jurisdiction of the finance commis-

There was no need for a new commission. What was necessary was to study two reports already with the government-Rajamannar committee report on state autonomy prepared when the DMK was in power in Tamil Nadu, and the Asoka Mehta

committee report on panchayat raj institutions prepared when the Janata was at the centre. The central government needs to study the suggestions for devolution of economic power, contained in these reports without disturbing the political structure governing centre-state relations.

H.N. Bahuguna (MP and president of the Democratic Socialist Party): Though I have every confidence that the chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are wedded to the unity and integrity of India, as much as anyone else, I have not been able to understand the purpose they have served by holding such a conference. In fact, my fears are that Mrs Indira Gandhi will use it as a stick to arouse the emotions of every Indian with a view to frightening him with all possible and imaginary repercussions which such meetings may produce or are capable of. producing.

I think the commission headed by Justice Sarkaria will not be able to suggest the desired directions in view of its limited scope. It may not inspire all-round confidence.

Chandrajit Yidav (MP and president of the Janwadi Party): The Assam agitation, the Punjab agitation, the emergence of the Telugu Desam and the southern chief ministers' council, are all symptoms of the aggravating problems in India, none of which can be looked at in isolation. The source of the emergence of these agitations and the demands are the same. After three-and-a-half decades of our independence, certain factors have emerged. The socioeconomic structure, the administrative setup and even the parliamentary and political institutions require serious review. For example, in the question of centre-state relations, a review is overdue.

I think the formation of the southern chief ministers' council should not alarm anybody, because all the four chief ministers who attended the conference belong to opposition parties. It is but natural for them to have raised this question. Anyhow, they had been raising it individually in the past. For example, both the Anna DMK and the DMK had stood for this in the past as well; the only new element is that now they have taken a joint move.

Nobody should read a meaning into it as if it is a south-south question or a secessionist move. But the political aspect of it cannot be completely ruled out. This has become a style of functioning of our political parties. In my opinion, it would have been better if the southern chief ministers would have also associated with this move, the chief ministers of West Bengal, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir. But they did invite the Kerala chief minister, which he declined to accept.

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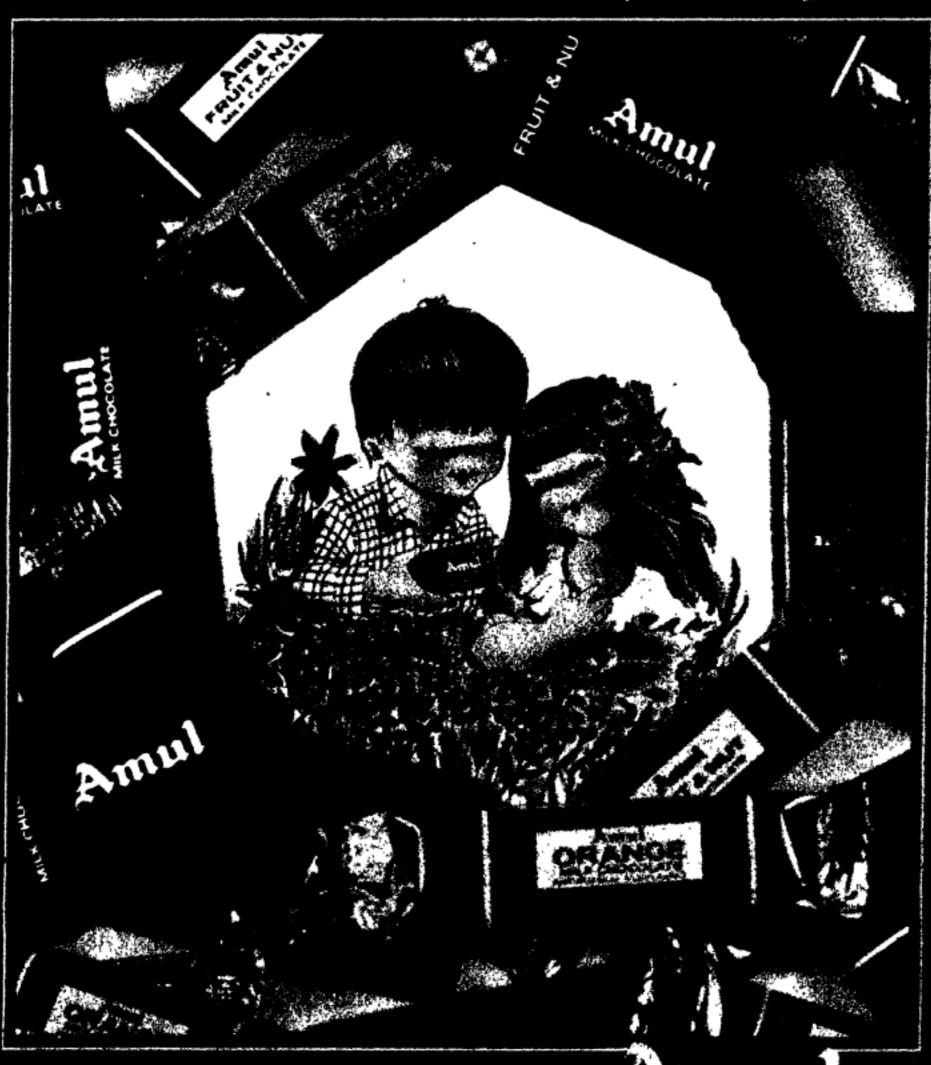
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A festival in Berlin

In an exclusive despatch from Berlin, SWAPAN KUMAR GHOSH reports on the 33rd international film festival.

erlin was cold, but alive on 18 February, the day the 33rd international film festival opened with the inimitable Dustin Hoffmanstarrer, Tootsie. And over the next 11 days there was enough to justify festival director Moritz De Hadeln's claim that this was, by all accounts, "the best supplied festival" that Berlin had ever staged. There was, however, the usual quota of disappointments: three films had been withdrawn at the last moment-Mrinal Sen's Kharij, the East German Stopover and Sophie's choice from the USA. It was later clarified that the festival authorities were not responsible for at least two of the withdrawals. The producer of Kharij had shifted the film to Cannes. Stop over had come under heavy political pressure from Poland (the film depicted a Pole as an international spy). As for Sophie's choice, no one seemed to have any idea why it was removed from the programme.

Competitive section

There were 24 feature and 15 short films in this section, representing very diverse styles and concepts of filmmaking. The nine-member international jury for this section was headed by the famous French actress-director, Jean Moreau.

Apart from the award-winning films (see box)—once again, there



Stills from:(right)Love camp; (above) My place, your place or right here; (below right) Chokh. (Below left) Ulrich Gregor, Forum director of Forum of Young Cinema introducing Chakraborty to W. German President





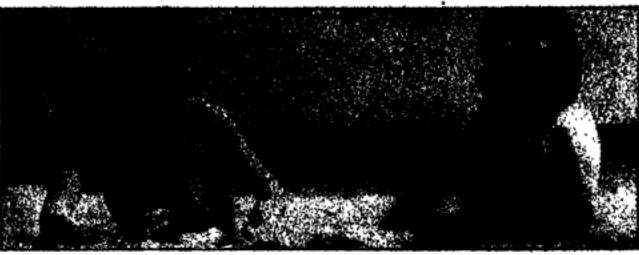


was a dispute among the jury members over the selection of the Golden Bear and Silver Bear award winners-six other entries aroused considerable interest. The first, Margarethe von Trotta's A labour of love, revealed the filmmaker's incredible control over the craft as she attempted to explore the lives of two women who represented two diametrically opposite worlds. Somehow, this film did not find favour with German audiences, and when Trotta appeared on stage after the screening, she was greeted by a round of booing. Nor did French novelist Alain Robbe Grillet's The beautiful captive go down very well in Berlin despite the fact that it, and Alain Tanner's In the white city, had been highly acclaimed by western critics.

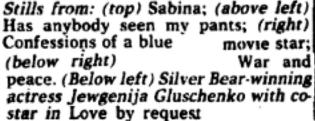
However, the Danish entry. Morten Arnfred's Land of plenty, did earn the respect that it deserved. Shot, by and large, against a quite landscape, the film was remarkable in its simplistic treatment; it explored the dilemma of the Danish farmers who are facing a severe financial crisis in the Eighties. Exiled filmmaker Sohrab Shahid Saless' Utopia (West Germany), though polite in its approach, was certainly an original view of the 'ideal life.' Finally, Daniel Schm'd's Hecate (France) concentrated on the eroticism in a relationship between an ambassador and his mistress.

Information section

The accent was on surveys of film production in different countries, particularly France and Brazil. The French pioneer of the modern documentary film, Chris Marker, was the star attraction of this section. His latest film, Sunless, received a thundering applause after the screening. A brilliant cine-poem, Sunless used lyrical passages to make a scathing evaluation of social development over the last 20 years.









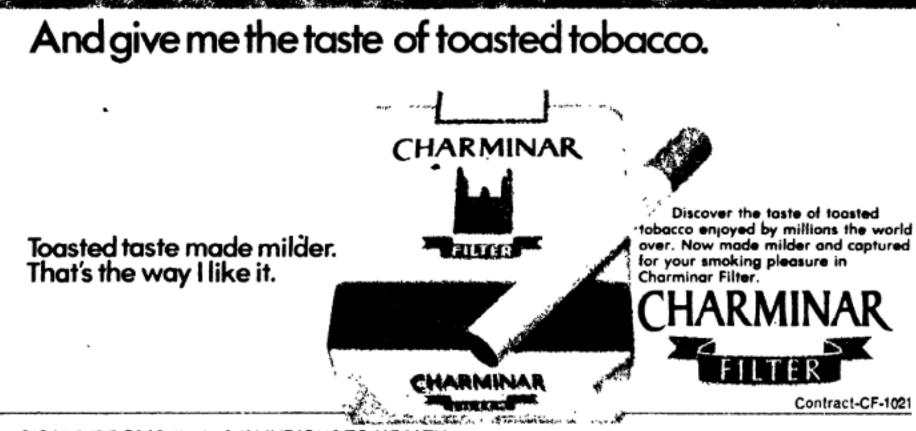






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War and peace (West Germany) was another big draw. Directed by Kluge, Stephen Aust, Heinrich Boll and Volker Scholondroff (they worked together for the third time), the film was structured around a current political issue: the threat of war in the face of nuclear proliferation. Using the German perspective and a mixture of footage from documentaries and feature films, the directors explored the long history of war in Germany.

Market section

There were no less than 20 stalls in this section, and almost half of them were peddling a new brand of West German films—some well made, some unpretentious, but almost all laced with a surfeit of sex.

It was abundantly clear that German cinema is in the throes of a severe crisis. And the crisis is not of ideas alone. "Sex films are the only profit-making films which we can produce with limited resources in Germany today," said Wolfram Skowronnek, business advisor to the renowned film distribution company, Filmverlag der Autoren. "It is on sex films that, more or less, the German film distribution companies are surviving. In a way, the profit that we make on these films helps us to release a few 'good' films in the country and abroad." However, in the category of 'good' films, there were very few.

For instance, Repa Film was selling an assortment of Alois Brummer's soft-porns-My place, your place or right here, a film about "a sweet little community nestled in the Alps...loaded and exploding with pretty young girls who will do anything, repeat anything, to get their fingers on the gold...Handsome young men exhausted from battles in bedrooms and haylofts but eager to try again;" There's no sex like snow sex, a film on "fun and games in the land of tall mountains and stacked ladies;" and How sweet is her valley, a film on Heidi, "a sweet, sexy young thing from the country who is confronted with the naked truth ... "

Scorpio Films had another Brummer title—Has anybody seen my



Stills from: Krausser's Liebe '80 (above) and Hubert Frank's Catherine Cherie (right); both the West German films were marketed by Scorpio Films at the market section of the 33rd international festival

pants, the story of a Texas farmer who "parachutes into the arms of a beautiful country girl who (in turn) shows him the way of love..." Scorpio had other interesting films as well: Hubert Frank's Catherine Cherie; La Parra's orgiastic My nights with Susan, Olpa, Julie, Albert, Piet and Sandra; Relin's Love under 17; and Krausser's Liebe '80.

Chanders (of Berlin) were promoting Anders' tantra film, Love camp, and Boerner's Catch your dreams. Monopol were marketing a real 'hard' porn, Confessions of a blue movie star, directed by a Polish filmmaker, Andrzej Kostenko. What surprised most film-buffs was the fact that none other than Roman Polanski himself had introduced this film as "a highly intellectual, visual documentation."

Four other films attracted attention: Milonako's Erotic passion, a film about a woman who makes love



to any man she can get hold of; Love games people play in Denmark, the story of a man who plans to make a sex comedy and win the "Golden Banana"—the annual Porno Film Festival's answer to the Oscar; Kumashito's Die Frau mit dem roten hut, a film on homosexuals; Gofilex Films' Sabina which explored the past of a woman who had been socially ostracised.

Young Cinema

Started as a parallel entity, the International Forum of Young Cinema thrives on its director Ulrich Gregor's enthusiasm and foresight.

The forum's objective is to promote small-budget, quality films and new filmmakers from different parts of the world. This year's selection resulted in exciting discoveries and experiments. Pier Paolo Pasolini's La rabia (The rage) produced some brilliant visuals. Ashes and ambers, by an underground American filmmaker, depicted the plight of a black Vietnam veteran. There were as many as seven German entries and the most impressive among these was Tankred Dorst's Strange fruitsa study of the backward conditions in a German village. Utpalendu Chakraborty's Chokh was yet another entry. Forum director Gregor described it as a "powerful film from India...a tough, critical film about the conflict between rich and poor." And finally, Chokh was awarded the jury prize by the Organisation Catholique Internationale pour le Cinema et l'Audio Visuel

The winners

Golden Bear (Grand Prix '83): Edward Bennet's Ascendancy (Great Britain) and Mario Camus' La Colmena (The beehive— Spain).

Silver Bear (for best director): Eric Rohmer for his Pauline a la plage (Pauline at the beach— France).

Silver Bear: Erden Kiral's Hakkaride bir mevsim (A season in Hakkari—Turkey). Silver Bear (for best actress): Jewgenija Gluschenko for her performance in Vlublen po sobstvennomu zelanij (Love by request—USSR).
Silver Bear (for best actor): Bruce

Dern for his performance in That championship season (USA). Silver Bear (for outstanding single achievement): Xaver Schwarzenberger for his film, Der stille ozean (The silent ocean—Austria).



Mahatma Gandhi: The path to non-cooperation

Against the background of the turbulent decades before independence, MADHU LIMAYE traces Mahatma Gandhi's political and personal journey from being a loyal supporter of the British *raj* to its most implacable opponent. In this, the first of a five-part article, covering the years 1919 to 1925, Mahatma Gandhi is shown moving away from his early stand of cooperation with the British to the launching of the civil disobedience movement.

1919: Twilight year

teen was a twilight year in the history of Indo-British relations. It was a year of unrest, of upheaval. Broad sections of India's population were swept into the political current. The political India mobilised by Lok-manya Tílak and Annie Beasant, and Mohammadali Jinnah, through his championship of Hindu-Muslim unity, was demanding implementation of the promise in the Montagu declaration on responsible government. The Indian Muslims were extremely

agitated over the fate of the Ottoman Empire and Khilafat following the termination of the war. A new force was slowly coming to birth, and the mood was one of expectation.

The British rulers sought to meet the popular dissatisfaction by the harsh Rowlatt Bills which armed the government with extraordinary powers to curb the liberty of the people. They met with universal opposition in the Imperial Legislative Council and outside. Men like Jinnah resigned from the Council in protest against the Bills. Gandhiji now put himself at the head of the new awakening. The Indian people in-

stinctively realised that Gandhiji was a different type of leader. Different not only from Gokhale, Srinivasa Sastri and M.A. Jinnah but they realised that he was different also from Lokmanya Tilak who had made himself, to use Gandhiji's expression, the "idol" of the people by his fearless propagation of the cause of Swaraj

Hartal: New weapon

The new era was inaugurated by a nation-wide hartal The various currents of public dissatisfaction now fused into a mighty, united movement. The whole of India from one

Gandhiji at the Ahmedabad session of the Indian National Congress in December 1921



end to the other, towns as well as villages, observed a complete hartal on 6 April 1919. "It was a most wonderful spectacle." (Autobiography, Mahatma Gandhi, p. 349). Gan-

dhiji wrote:

"We are now beginning to attract millions of our countrymen-...whether Hindus or Mohammadans, we have all got the religious spirit in us. Let it not be undermined by our playing at religion." (The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.XVI, p. 208).

Recalling the events of the previous year Gandhiji wrote in Young

India on 12 May, 1920:

"It was in that religious spirit that I came upon hartal. I wanted to show that it is not knowledge of letters that would give India consciousness of herself, or that would bind the educated together, The hartal illuminated the whole of India as if by magic on the 6th of April, 1919." (Ibid, Vol. XVII, p. 406).

Explaining the significance of the hartal, he frankly told the Hunter Committee (which had been appointed to investigate the disturbances in Bombay, Delhi and Punjab, their causes and the measures taken

to cope with them):

"Hartal had a two-fold purpose; one to strike the imagination of the people as also to strike the imagination of the government; but the second was a discipline for those who have to offer disobedience. I had no method of understanding the mind of India except by some such striking thing. If I had simply satisfied myself with fasting, I would not have known how many prayed. The hartal is a proper index to show how far I

could carry my principle." (Ibid, Vol. XVI pp. 386-87)

Leaders outpaced

The established leadership of the national movement was appalled by the new Gandhian creed. Some of them resisted it vigorously. When the Congress embraced his method during 1919-21, the remaining moderates seceded from the Congress. Others like Chittaranjan Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malaviya finally accepted it somewhat reluctantly. Motilal Nehru was among the early converts. Perhaps, his son played a part in shaping his opinion. Gandhiji began the process of converting the people and the Congress by taking over the Home Rule League, changing its name to Swarajya Sabha, and drastically altering its Constitution. Jinnah and Jayakar, among others, opposed the change. He dismissed their opposition. These leaders resigned in protest.

Why have these leaders left? Gandhiji asked in an article. He supplied the reply himself. "The simple answer is that the country is moving so fast that our leaders cannot keep pace with it."(Ibid, Vol. XVIII, p. 367; italics added.) He, however, expressed the hope that when the leaders realised the value of "the strong popular current" they would not hesitate to join it. Some leaders like Jayakar and Kelkar, Chittaranjan Das and Lajpat Rai did, but Jinnah refused to fall in line. He withdrew for nearly two decades, then, by 1940 re-emerged to avenge his previous defeat. By now he had himself become the leader of "another strong popular current." The clash of these "two strong popular currents" and their leaders led to the tragedy of partition.

Among the established leaders the tallest was Lokmanya Tilak. Only in 1917—18 did Montagu, the secretary of state for India, during his visit to this country, note in his diary that Tilak was the "biggest" and the most "powerful leader." In courage and suffering no other leader could hold a candle to him. He had been tried and convicted twice for sedition. Yet Gandhiji's philosophy and his method of mass violation of laws did not appeal to him. It would not be proper to say that he held that "everthing was fair in politics," a saying attributed to him by Gandhiji. He was no longer the extremist he was at the turn of the century. A subtle change had come over Tilak's thinking. He believed in the constitutional methods of agitation; he was prepared to offer responsive cooperation; and he hoped that the rising Labour movement in Britain would help the nationalist cause. Although he had not been averse in his earlier career to exploiting Hindu religious sentiments he had now become wholly political in his approach to the question of self-government.

He was a convinced democrat and did not hesitate to support the Congress-League Pact in 1916. Yet a gulf was now opening between the "loyalist Gandhi" and the "Father of Indian unrest" (Valentine Chirol's description of Tilak). In his introduction to Avantike Gokhale's life of Gandhiji, Tılak had indeed given qualified support to satyagraha. But Tilak held that Gandhiji's method was appropriate for sadhus and not for worldly people. At the Amritsar Congress the two managed to patch up a compromise. Both had wanted

Gandhiji (centre) with V.S. Srinivasa Sastri and S. Satyamurti: practising non-violence



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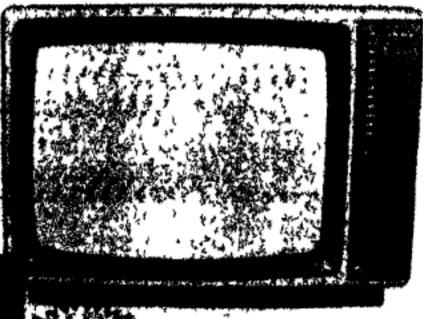
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to work the reforms for what they were worth; but the Khilafat, redressal of the Punjab's wrongs and the hunger for Swaraj were pushing the country towards a conflict with British power. In the nick of time Tilak died. That left Gandhiji the undisputed leader of the freedom movement. Jinnah became resentful. Gandhiji harnessed Tilak's great popularity by launching the Tilak Swaraj Fund and opening his great non-

But that was still a year ahead. In

cooperation movement.

1919 despite his campaign against the Rowlatt Bills and his call for a nationwide hartal, Gandhiji had not yet resolved to challenge the mighty British empire. The Amritsar massacres gave him a profound shock. But he had not turned into an enemy of the British Raj. He could still enthusiastically support a resolution offering thanks to the Emperor for issuing a proclamation in the "liberal" spirit. He demanded that the Congress session thank the secretary of state for India, Edwin Montagu. for his "hard work for India." He still wanted to work the reforms. He continued to speak in terms of offering cooperation to the Raj. He could still describe his relations with the Viceroy as "cordial." (Autobiography, p 333). He thought the refer ence in the Congress resolution to the Viceroy, Chelmsford, being "unfit for his post," was a bit "premature." (The Collected Works, Vol. XVI. pp. 464---67.) But as the new vear unfolded itself and the Khilafat question began to dominate Gandhiii's horizon, his attitude towards the British connection underwent a radical change.

Khilafat issue

andhiji did not approach the Gouestion of Khilafat from a historical perspective. Like Indian Muslim leaders, Gandhiji also appeared to be unfamiliar with the deep currents of national feeling in the Arab world. He also did not seem to take notice of the strong Turkish desire to cast off the legacy of the Ottoman empire and to transform their country into a national state. He knew that the Indian Muslims were extremely agitated over the dismemberment of the Ottoman empire, the violation by the British of the solemn pledges and the immorality of the secret treaties and agreements they had signed. The memorandum which the Khilafat deputation presented to the Viceroy had been signed, among others, by Mahatma Gandhi himself. It declared "the preservation of the Khilafat as a temporal no less than a spiritual institution" was not so much of a part of the Islamic faith as the "very essence thereof." (The implications of this were grave. The assertion was not only destructive of the common Indian nationality; it was a negation of even the Indian



Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhip conter in a train compartment, foes of the British

Musiim nationality.) The memorandum emphatically asserted that the Muslims could never agree to any change either in the character of Khilatat or "dismemberment of its empire." The deputationists further demanded that the Khalifa alone should be the warden of the holy places." (Ibid. Vol. XVI, p. 555).

Gandhiji's logic was very simple. eight crores of Indian Muslims were our brothers. What concerns "nearly one fourth of the nation must concern the whole of India, otherwise we could not call ourselves 'one nation,' we could not be a single body." (Ibid. Vol., XVI, p. 104).

Gandhiji perceived in the Khilafat question a danger as well as an opportunity. The danger was an outbreak of violence or Muslim migration (hijrat). This was fraught with frightful consequences. In his letter to the Viceroy on 22 June 1920 he said as much. There was a way out. he thought, and that was to refuse to be a party to the "injustace by ceasing to cooperate with the government." He offered an escape from the dire necessity of noncooperation: he invited the Viceroy to lead the agitation himself. It is doubtful whether Gandhiji seriously believed that the empire's representative in India could go against the high imperial policy. But he still claimed that he was writing as a "devoted well-wisher of the British empire," and as one who enjoyed "a certain measure" of the Vicerov's "confidence." (Ibid, Vol XVII, pp 502-4).

Satanic Raj

Mahatma Gandhi saw in the cham-

pionship of the Khilafat cause a unique opportunity of forging Hindu-Muslim unity. His subsidiary motive was to channelise Muslim resentment and the Hindu desire for freedom into the peaceful way of a non-cooperation movement against the British Raj with a view to winning Swarai Within a few weeks of the penning of his aforesaid letter to the Viceroy, Gandhiji was compelled to start his campaign. From loyal cooperation Gandhiji turned to organised sedition. He signaled the great change by writing to the Viceroy on 1 August 1920 and, in a dramatic gesture, returning his Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal awarded to him by the previous Viceroy, Lord Hardinge. He also returned the gold medals he had received for his services to the British empire in the Zulu and Boer wars. Now he denounced British rule in India as a Satanic Raj and gradually uncovered the whole panoply of his non-cooperation programme. Gandhiji had earlier considered the demand of Chelmsford's removal to be hasty. But now the Punjab sub-committee of the Congress, of which he was a member, itself demanded that the Viceroy should be "recalled." (Ibid, Vol. XVII, p. 289).

The British government's attitude of indulgence and admiration towards him turned to outright hostility. In 1917, Montagu had spoken highly of "the renowned Gandhi." He looked upon him as a "social reformer" determined to improve the conditions of his fellowmen. He described him as "the real hero" of the South African struggle against racial discrimination. He indulgently called him "a pure visionary," wantFor you, we captured the essence of France



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ing "the millions of India to leap to the assistance of the British throne." (An Indian Diary, Edwin Montagu, p.

British scared

The vast dimensions of the noncooperation movement, involving boycott of councils and courts, unnerved the British ruling class. The British Indian bureaucracy was frightened by the display of Hindu-Muslim unity. The British rulers had hoped that the unity would not last and that its foundaton was artificial. They could not conceal their unease while it lasted. Now all admiration for Gandhiji was gone, denunciation took its place. Every action of Gandhiji was suspect. The vilest motives began to be attributed to him. The erstwhile loyal friend was hereafter regarded as the arch enemy of the British empire. Even British statesmen with liberal inclinations were utterly exasperated with him.

The reaction of the British to this unusual non-violent struggle was best summed by the then Governor of Bombay, Lloyd: "He gave us a scare. Gandhi's was the most colossal experiment in world history, and it came within an inch of succeeding." Chelmsford returned to Ergland an embittered man. He had hoped to rally the country around the Reforms. But he failed to satisfy the now awakened India on the issues of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. With ill-concealed impatience he denounced the non-cooperation programme as the "most foolish of all foolish schemes." (The Collected Works, Vol. XIX, p. 16).

Reading's reading

Reading, the new Viceroy, could still write objectively about Gandhiji in the first year of his term. He wrote to Montagu: "There is nothing striking about his appearance... He is direct and expresses himself well in excellent English with a fine appreciation of words he uses. There is no hesitation about him and there is a ring of sincerity in all that he utters, save when discussing some political questions." (Lord Reading, by Montgomery Hyde, pp. 352-53).

The Viceroy conceded that Gandhiji's religious views were "admirable" and "genuinely" held. Reading liked him and believed that there were "possibilities" of cooperation in the future. He was to be progressively disillusioned. His first year in office saw the full impact of the new movement. In his letter to the Prime Minister written in May 1922 Reading acknowledged the increase in Gandhi's influence. He was of the opinion that this was very largely a consequence of what the Indians regarded as his "saintly character and his life." Reading was particularly impressed by the hold he had acquired over the Muslim mind. He

"Moreover he had made a bridge between the Hindu and the Mohammedan and from the political side that became of great importance. The Punjab disturbances and Amritsar gave him a great opportunity in 1919, he seized hold of the Mohammedan discontent for the purpose of making a combined movement in favour of Swaraj. Thus his power grew, but equally he had to meet all the difficulties of a political combination of this character." (Ibid. pp 375-76).

Reading avoided arresting Gandhiji. His "kid glove" treatment of Gandhi's movement evoked opposition amongst the backwoodsmen. The pressure for action grew; lawless repression was unleashed against the non-cooperationists. But Reading stayed his hand with respect to Gandhi. The bureaucracy was up in arms against the Viceroy's failure to take action against Gandhi Tei Bahadui Sapru, the then law member, wai ned the home member against precipitate action:

> "During the last twelve months or so his influence has extended over a much larger area than perhaps we can realise.. He is not a mere politician in the eyes of the masses. He has all the sanctity of a holy man attached to him, and therein lies, to my mind, the secret of his hold and also the danger of it."

Chauri Chaura setback

The outbreak of violence at Chauri Chaura shook Gandhiji's faith in the preparedness of the masses for collective non-violence. The Moplah frenzy and Chauri Chaura violence were symptomatic of the fact that the practice of mass non-violence required a discipline and training which had not yet been achieved by the Indian people. They did not come up to Gandhian standards. Therefore Gandhiji thought it fit to suspend the movement.

His followers became dispirited. The Muslim leaders were angry. The British bureaucracy was in uproar, it pressed Reading to act. The Vicerov too thought that the moment to strike had arrived. Gandhiji was arrested, tried for sedition and was given the same heavy sentence as was inflicted on Tilak. Tilak, who had a sneaking admiration for the British legal system, defended himself. The loyalist Gandhi, now turned non-cooperator, made a thundering statement before the court and asked for the resignation of the trial judge or a maximum sentence.

By 1924-25 India was riven by communal riots. The freedom movement seemed to be in the doldrums. Das and Nehru had entered the Councils. Gandhiji was out, but he devoted himself to constructive

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JADEJA PROPERTY AUCTION

Royal persecution

Manoharsinhji Jadeja, health minister in the Gujarat government and erstwhile prince of Rajkot state, is being made to pay a very heavy price for not seeing eye-to-eye with Gujarat CM Madhavsinh Solanki, reports TUSHAR BHATT

t was a sultry afternoon, with less than 50 people in the Masonic Hall in Rajkot. Half of those present were newsmen and photographers. There were a number of income tax officials and only three bidders to compete for what would go down as a unique property auction in postindependence India. A little after 3.30 pm on 17 March, the tax recovery inspector Mr K. Abdul Rahman, standing nervously behind a podium wiping his glasses repeatedly, announced: "We have all assembled here to auction the property of the honourable minister, Mr Manoharsinhji Jadeja for the recovery of tax arrears due to him."

It was a slip of the tongue. The department was not auctioning the property of the minister, Mr M. Jadejo, but the former prince of Rajkot, Mr M. Jadeja, a distinction that would be too subtle and unimportant for most since both the former prince and the present minister are the same person. The 46-year-old Mr Jadeja is in a very tight corner for his inability to pay up estate duty, wealth and income tax and other legal dues that would total between Rs 63 lakhs and Rs one crore. He had not defaulted wilfully; nor had he denied his liabilities. But the strange quirk of fate—ably aided by dilatory tactics of the chief minister, Mr Madhavsinh Solanki, with whom Mr Jadeja does not see eye to eye-had brought about a situation in which his property was being auctioned in the very town that had been the seat of the Jadeja rajput dynasty for more than three-and-a-half centurics.

The impact of the auction that began on 17 March would be wideranging for various people. The citizens of Rajkot in particular and of Saurashtra as a whole, who have consistently nursed a feeling of neglect in Gujarat, were annoyed that Mr Jadeja was being humiliated in this manner. "It is a case of sheer injustice prompted by political animosity that has led to this situation" was the common refrain. Curiously, they did not find fault with the income tax department which was auctioning Mr Jadeja's property, but with the state government, especially chief minister Solanki, for not 50

having granted permission to Mr Jadeja to sell land, using the clause of "undue economic hardship" in the Urban Land Ceiling Act which bars transactions in land plots bigger than a particular size without the

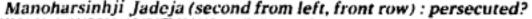
government's permission.

More than 200 kilometres away in. Gandhinagar, pro'Solanki forces stepped up their counter-campaign to get Mr Jadeja out of the cabinet. Political mentor of Mr Solanki and former president of the Gujarat Pradesh Congress(1) committee, Mr Jhinabhai Darji, threatened to go on a fast if Mr Solanki exempted Mr Jadeja from the Urban Land Ceiling Act. Mr Mohammed Hussein Barejiya, a Congress(1) legislator who was earlier a dissident, and is now a hopeful for a cabinet berth if Mr Solanki expands his cabinet, demanded the resignation of Mr Jadeja. The chief minister himself told a party meeting that he had tried to help Mr Jadeja but Mr Jadeja refused to see reason which ultimately led to the auctioning of his property. Anti-Congress(I) forces in the state were overjoyed that Mr Solanki and Mr Jadeja were openly emerging in a confrontation. "This is the best thing that could have happened after the resignation of the veteran Saurashtra leader, Mr Ratubhai Adani, from the Congress(I)," said one of them.

Technically, the income tax de-

partment could not but have put up Mr Jadeja's land and buildings for auction as the government did not budge in its stand about permission to dispose of the land through an exemption in the Land Ceiling Act. But the shoddy work put in by the Gujarat government's land revenue department in the affair did underline the political aspect of it all. It gave rise to an impression that Mr Solanki had delayed permission till the end in order to publicise the possibility of the auction of Mr Jadeja's property with a view to humiliate him. Having done so, the government tried to persuade the income tax department to put the auction off, even through the offices of chief secretary, Mr H.K.L. Capoor. But the IT authorities refused to oblige unless the government gave a specific scheme of things, such as permission to sell the land for tax realisation to Mr Jadeja. The government was not ready with any alternatives. The cleverness of move was in the delay, which guaranteed its failure.

The average Saurashtra citizen's feelings were symbolised by the comments of the editor of Phulchhab, Mr Harsukhbhai Sanghani. The significance of the comments is that the Rajkot daily has never been an admirer of Mr Jadeja, nor of former princes. In fact, its antiprincely states stand was the hall-





mark of its policies during the freedom struggle. "Injustice has been done to Mr Jadeja in this case," said Mr Sanghani. Mr Jadeja's tragedy was that he had merely inherited property from his father on which

huge tax was assessed,

Mr Jadeja's case seemed to be that of a man who has to pay heavy taxes on a property that he inherited but could not sell to pay off the very taxes. The state officials have played a curious role in the affair. It appears that the income tax department did not want to include the Darbargadh, which is dilapidated and occupied by government offices, for auction but it was included at the suggestion of a

top official. Later, it was deleted from the notice again at the behest of the state government. The government has been using the Darbargadh for 33 years without paying any rent in accordance with an agreement with Mr Jadeja's father, the former king. The value of the Darbargadh was said to be Rs one crore but the state government itself refused to buy up at that rate, nor

Another curious aspect of the Jadeja affair is that having watched the situation to worsen for Mr Jadeja, the state government tried to stop the auction at the last moment at local levels—a guaranteed way of

pre-determined failure. When about a week remained for the auction, the government despatched an official to tell income tax authorities that they needed government permisson under the Urban Land Ceiling Act to auction the land belonging to Mr Jadeja. This is a legal knot: whether or not the income tax can do it. Understandably, the union law ministry advised the income tax authorities in Gujarat to go ahead. The IT authorities at the same time took out a caveat in the court, urging that if any stay on auction was sought by anybody (including the state government) the department should be heard.

Humiliations were showered on me continuously'

Manoharsinhji Jadeja told Sunday

In a high-ceiling drawing room, with pecling paint, old furniture and curtains missing from some doors and windows, there sat Mr Manoharsinhji Jadeja, former prince of Rajkot state and now health and civil supplies minister in the Solanki ministry. On 17 March, a tew hours before a part of his property and land were put up for auction by the income-tax departnient for recovery of dues in estate duty, wealth and income-taxes, Mr Jadeja, a blue-blooded kshatriya, velieved to be the 157th descendane of Lord Krishna, took time off .o speak to Sunday about his probleins. Some excerpts:

Q:How do you feel about the auction of your ancestral property?

A: Well, in a way it is quite a strange feeling. In the changed circumstances one has to face the situation, and I have attuned myself to it. It will be a novel experience because I have seen those

days when prior to the merger (of the princely state) people used to come in flocks to have their grievances redressed. Today, I will be witnessing the property of my forefathers being auctioned and, therefore, I call it a novel experience.

Q: Do you feel humiliated? A: The days of humiliation are

over. Humiliations were showered on me continuously propaganda through the press here (in Rajkot), in Gujarat, probably outside Gujarat too. But now I have got myself accustomed to the situation.

Q: Do you think the auction could have been avoided?

A: It could have been, if it was thought proper.

Q: Thought proper by whom? The state government?

A: Naturally.

Q: Why did the state government not act earlier than it did in the matter?

A: Well, you will have to ask the state government about it.

Q: Do you think the delay was politically motivated?

A: I do not think it will be befitting my status (as a minister) to say anything about that. Q: But you would not reject the

matter altogether? A: I will not speak a word about

Q: Are you thinking of quitting

the cabinet? A: No I would not link this issue with anything else. This is purely a

personal matter, a matter for which I went to seek justice on the grounds which I have stated very clearly. 1 only feel satisfied that when in 1976 when I first applied for permission I had made it clear that I have to pay dues and legal dues and I do not have any other means (of paying it) except by selling off the land. That comention of mine has proved correct.

Q: So, it is not a case of wilfus default, but your inability to pay. the dues?

A: It is no default. I have accepted the liabilities cast upon me and I have not said no to it. On technical grounds I may have gone to tribunals, but as far as habilities against me are concerned I have never denied them.

Q: Why did you not go to a court to get a stay, as some other former rulers have done?

A: I do not know why other former rulers have gone to court. But as far as I am concerned, I did not do it. I know the IT authorities have to collect the dues from me.

Q: What exactly are the arrears? A: The arrears of estate duty and wealth and income-tax are put at about Rs 62 lakhs, plus a capital gains tax of about Rs 25 lakhs and some other dues. The total liabilities would be around Rs 90 lakhs according to me, though some estimates put it at about rupees one crore.



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Will Mrs Gandhi hold a mid-term poll this year?

lmost all opposition leaders are convinced that Mrs Gandhı will go in for. a mid-term poll. Some of them have even said so publicly. Others have admitted in private that they are apprehensive of such an eventuality. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders, for example, have already made public statements about the possibility of a snap poll The party president, Mr A. B. Vajpayce, forecast that it will be held sometime this year. Mr H. N Bahuguna of the Democratic Socialist Party, otherwise totally opposed to all BJP stands, is of the same opinion. The Janata Party has not, as yet, made any formal statement on the matter, but some party leaders, including the party president, Mr Chandra Shekhar, think there may be a mid-term poll by the end of this year or by early next year. The CPI(M) and CPI leaders, while not making any public statements, have raised this question in their respective central committee meet-

Mrs Maneka Gandhi is absolutely certain of her mother-in-law's intention of holding a mid-term poll sometime in June this year. She told some correspondents in Delhi recently, "I am sure that the elections are coming in June. I know Rajiv has been to Amethi recently and he has already appointed five men for each polling booth of his constituency. Rajiv would not have done this if elections were not due very soon." She added: "Special favours are now being distributed to the poorer sections of the people. like giving away sewing machines to harijans or writing off their loans. These things are being done because the elections are coming.". Mrs Maneka Gandhi had earlier



By BARUN SENGUPTA

predicted that the mid-term poll would be held at the end of the year; she now feels it will take place even sooner.

Most union ministers, however, and senior officials I spoke to in Delhi recently, emphatically denied that there was any possibility of a mid-term poll Some of them argued: Why should the PM go m for a mid-term poll now? In another two years the situation in the south would be less unfavourable to her, perhaps, because the current anti-Mrs Gandhi wave would by then have lost its ferocity. The Congress(1) leaders think that the NTR wave will wither away very soon and the Hegde government in Karnataka will not survive long. They also feel that Mrs Gandhi's position in the Hindi heartland will not change much between now and 1985. Nor will the major opposition parties in that belt be able to come together in that period. Some Congress(I) leaders have even gone so far as to predict that the in-fighting among the main opposition parties in northern India will substantially increase after Morarji Desai and Chaudhary Charan Singh move out from the political scene. They argue that the political careers of these two leaders are nearing their end. They are certain, therefore, that Mrs Gandhi will not hold a general election before 1984 and some think she might even wait till the due date in 1985.

The decision on the scheduling of the polls will depend, of course, entirely on Mrs Gandhi and her son, Rajiv. And, obviously, they will not opt for a mid-term poll until and unless they are convinced. But is this the case? At present her chances of victory in West Bengal, Kashmir and Punjab are quite slim. And while in the absence of a united opposition in the Hindi belt, her chances of gaining around 60 per cent of the seats are good, the situation in the three major states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, is not very favourable for her It is not that there is any significant anti Mrs Gandhi wave in those states, but the common man's anger against local politicians is strong and this may affect the Congress(1)'s chances

In 1977, when Mrs Gandhi went in for a snap poll, the late Sanjay Gandhi had strongly advised her against this move. Not because he thought that the Congress would be deteated, but because he felt that the "gains of the Emergency" would be lost. As it turned out Mrs. Gandhi was defeated the family planning programme and the unity that the opposition displayed, combined to defeat her. Given the fact that in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Kashmir now the anti-Mrs Gandhi feeling runs high among the voters, she is unlikely to seek a tresh mandate at this moment

Mr Rajiv Gandhı has taken on the task of reorganising the Congress(1). In a recent meeting of the state Congress(1) chiefs, he declared that the party would form a two-lakh strong cadre within the next few years. He has indicated that the party would also take steps to enforce strict discipline within the organisation. Had the elections been imminent, would Mr Gandhi have taken such steps on the eve of a poll? Till such time as the party is reorganised he will not advise his mother to go in for a mid-term poll. The task of reorganisation will take some time: the Congress(1) is not a cohesive organisation nor does it have a tradition of inner-party discipline. Thus the Prime Minister will think many times before she takes this step, which is all the more unlikely in the near future as the results of the last mid-term poll she held, were so disastrous.

Mrs Gandhi in a meeting: contemplating a mid-term poll?



GOVERNMENT

Will Sarkaria panel sort out centre-state relations?

Or is it yet another example of Congress(I)'s short-term management?

New Delhi: The appointment of the Sarkaria Commission to review the "entire gamut" of centre-state relations has been yet another example of short-term management which the Congress(I) government has been specialising in. Prima facie, the decision is welcome. But when one goes into the heart of the announcement made by the Prime Minister on 24 March, nothing concrete is visible. Mrs Gandhi had finalised only two things when she appointed the Commission One, that there has to be a panel going into the question of centre-state relations, and two, that it shall be headed by Justice R.S. Sarkaria, a retired Supreme Court judge. Beyond this, nothing else was decided. It was announced that the terms of reference and additional members, if any, would be announced later. This certainly is proof enough of the hurry with which the announcement was made.

On 20 March, the chief ministers of three southern states, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamii Nadu and one union territory, Pondicherry, met at Bangalore and formed a couthern states' council. While these four non-Congress(I) chief ministers, at the initiative of the Janata' Party

leader, Mr Ramakrishna Hegde, the chief minister of Karnataka, decided to take the initiative in starting a debate on centre-state relations, the only Congress(I) chief minister in the south stayed away. Not only did Mr K. Karunakaran of Kerala abstain from the Bangalore meet, he issued a statement criticising the council the next day. This clearly showed the attitude of the Congress(1) about centre-state relations. But within the next few days there was apparently some rethinking and the Prime Minister announced the setting up of the Sarkaria Commission. The credit for the setting up of the Commission can certainly be shared by Mr Ramakrishna Hegde, if not entirely appropriated by him.

Bangalore has played an important role in contemporary history—it was here that the Congress in 1969 decided to put up Mr Sanjiva Reddy for presidentship, an event which brought in its train the Congress split and ushered in the Indira Gandhi era in national politics. It was near Bangalore that Mrs Gandhi had her political rejuvenation in 1978 (when she won the Chickmagalur byelection). Again, it was in Bangalore that the first-ever Janata Party

government was formed in the south. The Bangalore meeting of the four chief ministers too, seems to have ushered in a new phase in national politics—a phase where the states, whose powers had slowly been curtailed in the past two decades, may assert their rights.

assert their rights. Since 1967, when for the first time we had different parries ruling in the centre and the states, the debate for the review of centre-state ties has been on. The Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Front in West Bengal was one of the first to voice its views. Later, the Abolis in Punjab and the National Conference of Jammu and Kashmir raised their voice. Now, many others have joined this chorus: the All-India Anna DMK, the Tolugu Desam and the Janata Party governments as well. Today, apart from some union territories, as many as six state governments-West Bengel, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh-have ron-Congress(I) governments. Of these, the ones in West Bengal, Tripura and Tamil Nadu are in their second successive five-year term. This scenario certainly has acted as a catalyst for the setting up of the Sarkaria panet.

The attitude of the Congress(I) towards centre-state relations is reflected in the party's internal politics. Over the years, under the leadership of Mrs Indira Gandhi, the organisation has become centreoriented. The choice of chief ministers of the states ruled by the party has been made from New Delhi. On some occasions, soon after the 1980 Assembly elections, the entire Congress(I) Legislature Party of some northern states came to New Delhi to "elect" their new chief ministers. The imposition of chief ministers from the centre became a bone for the Congress(I) during the recent Andhra elections. None of the PCC(I)s have elected their leaders sitting in the state capitals. Every time it has been the party headquarters in New Delhi which has nominated the pradesh party chiefs. Such has been the emphasis on the decision-making by the centre that almost every state government has felt it expedient to expand its guest houses in New Delhi. In the case of

Mrs Candhi: mere gimmickey?



some states, the blueprints of the new guest houses have been drawn up keeping in view the influx of the entire legislature wing of the party in power to the capital during political crises. During the southern election campaign in December-January, and earlier too, Mrs Gandhi, time and again, emphasised the need for a strong centre. The Congress(I), therefore, has no doubt been in favour of the balance being tilted towards the centre.

There is no denying the fact that a strong centre is required for national unity. In the days of Jawaharlal Nehru, the national leadership took pride in pointing out that owing to the vastness of the country and the different regional aspirations, India's strength stemmed from "unity in diversity." The thinking today is that if the electorate in any state has chosen a party other than the one in power in the centre, then there is a threat to national unity. At the time of setting up the Sarkaria panel, the Congress(I) has faltered in spelling out its terms merely because it is undertaking an unpalatable exercise. The Bangalore meeting called by Mr Ramakrishna Hegde has not only been a catalyst, but also acted as a compelling factor for the Sarkaria panel.

The task before Justice Sarkaria, though initiated with the backdrop

of gimmickry, is a national necessity. In the years immediately ahead, if serious thought is not given to centre-state issues, then the result may be chaos. The freedom movement had left behind a generation of national leaders. This generation of leaders, with a nationwide image, is on its way out, in the absence of anything like the yoke of foreign rule to unite the masses for a national movement. Moreover, a second generation of national leadership is yet to emerge. The national problems, therefore, have to be solved within a very short time.

In the life of any nation which is 35 years old, a phase like the one presently being faced by India is bound to come. Some of the strongest democracies in the West had to undergo civil wars before nationalism and democracy could take firm root. In India, non-violence has been the creed even while fighting foreign rulers. National problems, therefore, can certainly be settled across a conference table. But for this, while taking such vital steps like the setting up of a commission to go into centre-state relations, the government should take not only the opposition parties into confidence, but come forward with more concrete terms than what Mrs Gandhi

RAJASTHAN

Does the government shelter dacoits?

Jaipur: Dreaded dacoits holding conferences in the presence of police officers and politicians has become a routine affair in Dholpur district which borders dacoit-infested areas of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The newly carved out district had hit the headlines two years ago with the sensational exposure of flesh trade in the area.

On 16 March, the BJP MLA, Raghuvir Singh Kaushal, charged in the Vidhan Sabha that Congress(I) workers including the minister of state for local self government, Pradyuman Singh and ex-minister, Banwarilala Sharma, are in league with dacoits and criminals. Possession of guns has reportedly become a status symbol in the area and guns are available even on hire. Mr Kaushal disclosed to a stunned House that the dacoit, Khalil, who surrendered recently was garlanded by police officers and Congress(I) workers including ex-MLA 'Saligram and was taken in a procession through the town. And this, when Khalil has been accused of killing two police officers. The situation here today is such that law abiding citizens are reluctant to complain

against criminals

did on 24 March.

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya

The reign of criminals in the area was highlighted in the Vidhan Sabha again when some members raised the issue of the intimidation of Jain sadhvis (nuns) near Sadhulkhera in

Dacoit Khalil (with garlands) with ex-MLA Saligram and some Congress(I) workers.

Chittorgarh district, close to the chief minister's constituency. Enquiries made by SUNDAY reveal that three sadhyrs, while travelling with a male escort, Mangilal Jain, were accosted by anti-social elements who, after tying Mangilal Jain to a tree, attempted to rape the sadhvis. The police took their own time to reach the spot and even after that, managed to arrest only some school children. Armed gangsters did not allow the police to enter the village and according to some members, arms had been hoarded there.

This issue had to be raised in the House for three days before the chief minister, Mr Shiv Charan Mathur, said that a deputy inspector general of police from Jaipur was being dispatched to find out what happened. Bandhs and demonstrations were then organised. Another instance of police inefficiency which was brought up in the Vidhan Sabha was the rape and subsequent murder of

A funeral procession of Manju who was raped and killed



Manju, a harijan girl in Bikaner. Her body was found near the army quarters and harijans took out a procession with her body. The matter was raised through an adjournment motion but the government remained as callous as ever. Irked by the government's indifference to the incident, the Janata Party MLA, Devi Singh Bhati, came to the Assembly with a placard which read: "Chief minister's daughter mass raped." Mr Bhati was subsequently expelled from the Vidhan Sabha.

Nothing can be more illustrative of the law and order situation prevailing in Rajasthan than screaming advertisement of the Western Railways in local papers, appealing to the passengers to boycott gangsters who frequently beat up train drivers and security officials and damaged trains. The advertisement further warns that the railway authorities might have to cancel the trains if the present situation persisted

Milap Chand Dandia

BIHAR

No action taken on political murder

Patna: The claims of the Bihar chief minister, Dr Jagannath Mishra that all is well on the law and order tront in the state, received a shattering blow in the Legislative Assembly recently. The opposition members grilled the government on the spate of political murders which have been taking place with impunity.

On 18 March, the entire opposition led by Mr Karpoori Thakur walked out of the Assembly when the speaker, Mr Radhanandan Jha, refused to admit an adjournment motion moved by the opposition leader, to discuss the brutal murder of Mr Jyoti Prakash of the CPI(M) state executive at Buxar on 17 March. The enraged opposition wanted a special debate on the issue but it was clear that the government would have a hard time defending itself. A call

attention motion was pending in the House in which a CPI(M) legislator, Mr Ram Deo Varma had tried unsuccessfully to draw the attention of the House, to the threat which Mr Jyoti Prakash faced. The sensational manner in which Mr Jvoti Prakash was later murdered in daylight, while travelling in a bus along with his daughter, speaks volumes for the state of Bihar's law and order. In fact, on 18 March itself, a CPI legislator, Mr Ram Deo Rai had told the lower House how, in the last two and a-half years, more than 48 workers of the CPI, along with 12 others, had been killed in his constituency.

Angered by the murder of Mr Jyoti Prakash, a fact-finding team consisting of Mr Jabir Hussain (Yuva Janata), Mr Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, (CPI-M), Mr Ramashray Singh and

Jagannath Mishra: no law and order



Mr Ram Deo Varma (CPI-M) motored to Buxar on the afternoon of 18 March, straight from the Assembly. They came back with startling facts about the collusion of the local administration with goondas. Mr Jyoti Prakash had, apparently, incurred the wrath of taxi drivers and owners who had encroached upon a piece of land near the railway station for parking their vehicles. These taxidrivers had driven out hundreds of rickshaw-pullers, whom Mr Prakash brought together. A peaceful rally had been organised on 22 February when they demanded that their stand should be restored to them. According to the committee's press release, the police who were in collusion with the taxi owners and drivers, retaliated with a lathi-charge on the poor rickshaw pullers while Jyoti Prakash was addressing them. Mr Prakash himself received lathi blows on his head. No sooner was he released from jail and the issue raised in the Assembly than the policegoonda combine in Buxat reacted sharply.

According to the fact-finding committee's report, a conspiracy was hatched in which the inspector of Buxar police station, A S. Thakur and another officer from Brahampur, Mr R N. Roy, played a dubious role. Jyoti Prakash's daughter, Manju, who was in hospital, recovering from gunshot injuries told the members of the fact-finding team how the assailants had been joking with and talking to the agent of the Rajhans bus service at the Arrah bus-stop. She informed the members that two of the assailants sat at the rear end of the bus and one of them sat in front and kept chatting with the driver, once the bus began its journey. The moment the bus had crossed Brahampur, the driver brought the vehicle to an abrupt halt and the two assailants who had been sitting at the rear end asked the passengers to get down. Within minutes they fired from their guns. Manju was hit and she fell down. The assailants then shot bullets into Mr Prakash until he was dead. After this they walked out of the bus casually and without any fear, said the committee members in their report.

The report also draws attention to the fact that none of the Congress (I) members in Buxar cared to come and lay a wreath on the body of Mr Jyoti Prakash when members from all other political parties paid their respect. The committee has demanded from the government, stern action against the police officials, compensation of rupees one lakh to the bereaved family, the constitution of an all-party inquiry commission and the restoration of the stand to the rickshaw-pullers. The government, however, was yet to take any action till the time of going to press.

Niraj Roy

Left Front wrangles over *panchayat* polls

Calcutta: The imminent panchayat elections in West Bengal will be, on the one hand, a crucial test for the unity and understanding among the Left Front partners, and on the other, a trial of strength, mainly between the CPI(M) and the Congress(I). It is, perhaps, for the first time that rural Bengal will witness a complete polarisation of political forces between these principal contenders.

The CPI(M) has already held a series of bilateral talks with other Front constituents to reach an accord on seat adjustment, without any tangible outcome. Consequently, the area of disagreement may widen if the Front partners fail to convince their men at the grassroots' level about the need to achieve unity in order to defeat "their main enemy," the Congress(I).

The Front leaders concede that this time their nominees will not get "a walkover" as they virtually did in 1978. The fall of the Congress government, both at the centre and in the state, had paved the way for the Front's victory in the panchayat elections then. They were thus able to win about 37,000 out of a total number of about 56,000 seats. The Congress(I) received a lion's share of the remaining 19,000.

The last time the Front partners had failed to reach an accord on about 8,000 seats. The then state party secretary of the CPI(M) and Left Front chairman, the late Mr Promode Dasgupta, had evolved a formula by which 60 per cent of the panchayat seats within an Assembly constituency were to be conceded to the party of the sitting MLA, while the remaining 40 per cent were to be shared by other Front partners. But the directive from the Alimuddin Street, CPI(M) state headquarters did not find favour with the district party leaders in many areas and the disputes could not be resolved.

After the declaration of the panchayat poll results in 1978, Mr Dasgupta offered another formula to iron out the differences. It was thus resolved that the post of the zilla parishad president should go to the party winning the concerned panchayat seats, while the vice-president was to be chosen from the party gaining the second place. But this principle was flagrantly violated and in many zilla parishads, one Front constituent, aided by independents and even Congressmen, came o occupy both the posts of president and vice-president. Since then, no attempts have been made to clear he distrust and suspicion which marred telations among the Front partners over panchayat matters.

As the largest constituent in the ruling Front, the CPI(M) has claimed a substantial number of seats from which non-Left Front candidates were returned last time. Apparently, the formula for seat adjustment is quite simple. It has been agreed that the seats, won by the Front partners, will be allotted to the respective parties. As for the remaining 19,000, the claims of the Front partners gaining the second position, will be specially considered. However, the rise or decline in the strength of the respective parties will also have to be taken into consideration. Finally, claims of the CPI, the DSP and the SP, the late entrants to the Front,

will receive priority in seat allocation. The major Front partners, however, are reluctant to accommodate their claims.

The state leadership of the different Front constituents has been under pressure from their respective district committees not to accommodate one another's claims. Another hurdle in the way of fruitful bilateral discussions, is the reluctance, on the part of the legislators of one Front constituent, to concede seats within his constituency to candidates belonging to other Front partners. They apprehend an ecosion of their political power if nominees of other Front partners get elected in their areas. Besides, the conversion of the triple-member panchayat consti-tuencies into double-member ones has also created problems for the Front partners to reach an accord in some areas. Under the new system, one of the Front constituents is expected to cede its claim "for the sake of left unity."

The CPI had won a little over 1,200 gram panchayat and panchayat samiti seats by contesting about 3,000

Abdullah creates a stir

Srinagar: When the Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, casually told some Pakistani journalists during his recent visit to Saudi Arabia that if invited he would not mind visiting the Pak-held territory of Kashmir to take a look at the problems facing the people on both sides of the border, perhaps he did not realise that the remark would stir up



Abdullah: will he accept?

a hornets' nest. Always eager to stoke the fires of Kashmir's status, some leaders have begun talking about a new discussion.

Meanwhile, in "Azad Kashmir," Mr K.H. Khurshed, the president of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation League and a very influential leader during Ayub Khan's regime, has started sounding other "Azad Kashmir" leaders on how they might react if an invitation to visit "Azad Kashmir" is sent to Dr Abdullah. Among the leaders whom he has already consulted are two former presidents of "Azad Kashmir"—Sardar Ibrahim Khan and Khan Abdul Qayun Khan. He has also, reportedly, been in touch with the leaders of the Plebiscite Front, the Liberation Front, the Muslim League, the Muslim Conference and other pro-Pakistani groups.

Some leaders from that area, particularly Sardar Ibrahim Khan, Abdul Haliq Ansari, the leader of the Plebiscite Front, and Mr Amanullah Khan, who is controlling the Liberation Front from Birmingham, are very keen on inviting Dr Abdullah to "Azad Kashmir." The latter, especially, appears to want an opportunity to take Dr Farooq Abdullah into confidence about Maqbool Ahmed Butt, a founder of the Liberation Front, who is now awaiting execution in Delhi's Tihar jail.

Dr Abdullah, on a recent trip to Saudi Arabia, was asked by a group of Pakistani journalists what he would do if he was invited to visit "Azad Kashmir." The chief minster said that he was in favour of a free flow of traffic on both sides and he would not mind visiting "Azad Kashmir" if he ever got an invitation.

When the journalists asked him if he had any message for the leaders of "Azad Kashmir," Dr Abdullah pertinently wondered what message he could give to the "Azad Kashmir" leaders, since all of them were in jai! It is now learnt that the President of "Azad Kashmir," retired Major General Abdul Rahaman, who replaced Brig. Hyat Khan only last month, has set most of the politicians free.

Yusuf Jameel

MADHYA PRADESH

Convicts let loose to attack school children

seats last time. The party was defeated by a slender margin in about 700 seats, mostly in Midnapore district, where it had fought against the combined strength of the Left Front and the Congress(1). The CPI, therefore, has been demanding well over 2,000 seats as its legitimate share which is being disputed by the CPI(M). In other districts like 24 Parganas, Nadia. Birbhum and West Dinajpur differences between the two parties are yet to be resolved. Besides, relations between the two Front partners have been strained to some extent following the reported "exodus of CPI(M) leaders and workers into the CPI" in Birbhum and Nadia districts. The recent expulsion from the CPI(M), of Fakir Mohammad, an MLA from the Nakashipara constituency in Nadia district, and his subsequent decision to join the CPI with a large number of his followers, has also stood in the way of an honest discussion on seat

adiustment The Forward Bloc too is having serious differences with the CPI(M) over seat allocation in 24 Parganas, West Dinappur, Murshidabad, Midnapore and Jalpaiguri districts. A large number of CPI(M) panchayat members, hailing from Duttapukur, Kirtipur, Chhota Jaguli and other areas in Barasat sub-division of 24 Pargannas recently went over to the Forward Bloc as a mark of protest against "largescale corruption in the CPI(M)-dominated panchayats." In Coochbehar where the Forward Bloc has five out of nine MLAs, both the parties are preparing for a showdown in the coming election sche-

The RSP-CPI(M) relations have often been marked by sporadic clashes Ever since the installation of the first Left Front government in 1977 a number of the CPI(M) men deserted the party to join RSP units in 24 Parganas, Nadia and Murshidabad districts. The party does not share the CPI(M)'s contention that the panchayat members of a Front constituent, who have quit the party for political or ideological reasons, should not be entertained by any other partner.

duled to begin end May

Local problems, arising out of in adequate distribution of relief materials and work under the national rural employment programme, have embittered relations among the Front partners at the lowest level. The delayed formation of the district Left Front committee in Darjeeling and Nadia and the virtual nonexistence of Left Front unity in Coochbehar district for a long time are some other major irritants which have threatened to stall meaningful discussions. The Congress(I), which staged a comeback in the last Assembly election as a major political force, will no doubt, try to make terimum capital out of the Left tagt's discord if left unresolved. Attam Ghose

Raipur: About 100 convicts and warders of the Raipur Central Jail attacked students and teachers of the neighbouring Khalsa Higher Secondary School. This was due to a controversy about the school playground which the district administration had allotted to the public health engineering department for the construction of their office. The district administration had also plans of allotting the playground to a private transport company to which the school authorities steinly objected.

The trouble started on 15 March when the playground was being levelled out by school authorities after a circus show had ruined the ground. The jail authorities, presuming that the school authorities were acting against government orders sent some convicts and warders and handed over the workers and the

the education society, who had reached the spot after hearing about the previous night's incident, were brutally beaten by the convicts. Never before have convicts been let loose by the administration and that too to beat up school children. Seven teachers including Mrs Amrit Kaur and over 20 students were admitted to hospital. Many rooms and the laboratory of the school were destroyed.

Raipur city observed a bandh the next day. The district magistrate suspended the assistant jailer and only four warders and ordered a magisterial probe. When the matter was raised in the Vidhan Sabha on 17 March, the chief minister ordered a judicial probe but has not yet announced the name of the judge. The Sikh community too took out a silent procession to protest against



The injured schoolboys: innocent victims

school's chowkidar to the police.

The following day the four convicts and a jail warder started digging the playground. The students, already enraged by the previous night's happenings, rounded up the convicts and shut them in a classroom Mrs Amrit Kaur, a senior teacher of the school told Sunday that they had confined them to the room to save them from the fury of the other students.

The acting jail superintendent, meanwhile, complained to the police that the students had kidnapped four convicts. The jail alarm was then sounded and a 100-strong mob of convicts rushed to the school with lathis. They also tried to open the armoury of the jail but fortunately the head warder refused. The students, teachers and office-bearers of

the torture of the children in their school.

Mrs Kaur, who was beaten up while trying to save a boy who lay bleeding on the verandah told Sun-DAY, "I do not know what will be the outcome of the probe ordered by the government, but I will drag one and all to the court. It is really shocking that our government which treated the dacuit Phoolan Devi like a VIP, is tolerating such brutality on school teachers and children by convicts." Eyewitnesses disclosed that a subinspector and nine constables were present when the convicts and warders launched the attack. According to them the attack subsided only after the superintendent of police had arrived half-an-hour later.

M.V.Kher

The isolation of Ram Jethmalani

New Delhi: In the history of the Lok Sabha, no member has ever been as isolated as Mr Ram Jethmalanı was on 22 March. The BJP member sought to decry the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and India's friendship with the Arab countries, during the debate on a motion congratulating Mrs Indira Gandhi on her being elected the chairperson of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Not even a member of his own party rose to defend Mr Jethmalam when speaker after speaker, both from the treasury and the opposition benches, attacked him for his utterances. The highwatermark of the tirade against Mr Jethmalani came when, during his intervention in the debate, the external affairs minister, Mr PV. Narasimha Rao, referring to Mr Jethmalam's speech, said, that the Lok Sabha has had to face the "unenviable situation of hearing the voice of Israel "

Participating in the debate, Mr. Jethmalani said that the failure of the NAM to find a solution to the Iran-Iraq war showed that the "so called " movement had failed. Referring to the occasion during the NAM Summit when the PLO leader, Mr Yasser Arafat, had called Mrs Gandhi his sister, Mr Jethmalanı saggested that this amounted to calling her the "Satan's sister." This reference to the PLO leader totally isolated Mi Jethmalani from the rest of the House. Even Dr Subramaniam Swamy (Janata), who has in the past voiced pro-Israeli sentiments, refused to come to the aid of Mr Jethmalani.



Jethmalani: 'Voice of Israel?'

The debate was held under the shadow of a controversy. Soon after the Seventh Summit of NAM, the Congress(I) wanted to pass a resolution hailing Mrs Gandhi's election as the chairperson of NAM The opposition leaders, notably Prof. Madhu Dandavate (Janata) and Mr K.P. Unmkrishnan (Congress-S) felt that as Mrs Gandhi had been elected to the post by virtue of being the head of the host government, the resolution was unwarranted. The opposition leaders, however, were in favour of the Parliament hailing the success of the Summit and praising the officers who had made it a success. In the process, they wanted praise to be bestowed upon three leaders-Mrs Gandhi. Dr Fidel Castro of Cuba and Mr Yasser Arafat-for having guided the NAM conference smoothly. The Congress(I), however, felt otherwise and the resolution was brought torward by two of its members.

The resolution hailing Mrs Gandhi's election was passed by voice vote. But till the end, the non-communist opposition, with the exception of Mr Chandrajit Yadav (Janwadı Party), pressed for the amendments moved by Mr Unnikrishnan which sought to add the names of Dr Fidel Castro and Mr Yasser Arafat. The foreign minister saved the embarrassment by stating in his speech that he felt that the void created in the NAM by the deaths of Jawaharlal Nehru, Marshal Tito and Mr Gammal Abdel Nasser was now filled up by the trio of Mrs Gandhi, Castro and Arafat.

The role of Mr Jethmalani, apart from drawing the remark from Mr Narasimha Rao and caustic comments from other leaders, also brought forward an assertion by Mr Indrajit Gupta (CPI), which raised doubts on the role of the BJP in Parliament. Mr Gupta recalled that prior to calling Mr Arafat "Satan," Mr Jethmalani had, on the occasion of the debate on the Israeli aggression on Lebanon, expressed pro-Israel and anti-Arab sentiments. Later, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayce had to tell the House that the views of Mr Jethmalam were not those of the BIP. The CPI leader then hoped that the BJP president may not have to come out with similar statements, time and again.

A Special Correspondent

INCOME TAX RAIDS

Businessman commits suicide fearing exposure

Bombay: On Thursday, 17 March, at 7.10 am a silver haired, podgy man dressed in his nightclothes and wearing slippers, left his super deluxe residence, Vila Ramona, on Nepean Sea Road, drove in his Fiat stationwagon to his office in Fort area opposite Excelsior Cinema, and told the watchman to open the fifth floor administrative office. The watchman was puzzled because the "Sahab" had come in so early, and moreover his cabin was on the ground floor However, when the watchman opened the fifth floor office, the "Sahab" told him that he was not to be disturbed since he had a lot of work to do. Incidentally, the silverhaired man had mumbled the same thing to his people at home. By the time the watchman reached the ground floor, he heard a thud. He rushed out to the lawn in front of the office to find the "Sahab" lying in a pool of blood on the pavement.

The "Sahab" was Girish Khandwala (52), a business school graduate from Columbia University, the chairman and managing director of Forbes, Forbes and Campbell. He had joined the company in 1959 as a management trainge and reached the top last year. He was a favourite of the Tatas who are sole owners of Forbes, Forbes and Campbell. He did not like to have his photographs taken, so his picture does not appear even in any of the balance sheets.

Mr Khandwala leaped to his death exactly a month after the enforcement directorate nabbed three persons in connection with the detection of a Rs one crore foreign exchange racket, said to be the biggest-ever detected in recent times. Mr Khandwala was said to be closely connected with one of the persons, Mr C. P. Merchant, whose son with a Singapore connection was employed by Mr Khandwala. The three persons

caught last month were Mr C. P. Merchant, Mr Atul Bhagwati, former chairman of the Textile Machinery Manufacturers Association and Mr Bharat Shantilal Shah, said to be one of the biggest names in the gem and jewellery business. The three were produced before the metropolitan magistrate, Mr A. C. Mohalkar and released on temporary cash bail of rupees three lakhs each. Deposing before the metropolitan magistrate, Mr V. B. Survase, the chief enforcement officer said that Messrs Merchant and Bhagwati were directors of a dozen companies and the documents seized indicated transactions of a compensatory nature. According to the officer, Mr Merchant's son, Atul, was financing various companies in Indonesia and Singapore since April 1981 by providing loans on interest, through funds made available by his father. Mr Khandwala, according to a diary noting, was alleged to be one of the persons with whom the Merchants had dealings and had allegedly transferred on his behalf Rs one crore. Mr Khandwala's suicide (though the police very conveniently call it an accident because he was a wealthy man), is the second which has been directly related to long overdue raids by the enforcement directorate. The earlier case was that of Mr Naval Phatarphekar, chairman of Johnson and Johnson who reportedly died of a massive heart attack following a raid on the company.

The documents seized by the enforcement officers at the Merchant residence contain statement of accounts sent by Atul indicating amounts of loans advanced to various companies abroad and balance covering one full calender

year of 1982.

According to enforcement directorate sources, though this has been the biggest single detection ever, it is only the proverbial tip of the iceberg. In the last six years traders exported diamonds worth Rs 600 crores. Diamond traders believe in two things, official and unofficial imports, or raw diamonds, and the latter business is said to be four times bigger than the former. They have built an empire in Antwerp and some associates of these big exporters not only trade in diamonds in Antwerp but are financiers for big personalities who want to start business and industries abroad. They secure foreign exchange through manipulation. They export goods but repatriation of money earned does not take place. Legal battles are instituted by them with financial and banking institutions in India. The State Bank of India, for instance, is said to be in the midst of a legal battle involving



The window (circled) from which Khandwala jumped

not less than Rs seven crores in just one case last year in Hongkong. Similarly, the ECGC (Export Credit Guarantee Corporation) which is supposed to give guarantees to experters is believed to have been fooled to the tune of several crores of rupees by these traders.

Any effective investigation would reveal the personages behind this

racket. These are none else than the top exporters in the country with enough clout to stall any exposure. There are three types of industries which account for 30 per cent of the black money operations in Bombay. They are: the job recruitment business, the diamond trade and the building industry. The people who claim to be on the top ladders of industry are also those who have been associated with these industries for the last six years.

The nefarious activities of the diamond trade have now been repeatedly exposed. None else than the son of Mr H. H. Ismail, the doyen of the consular corps and a host to VIPs and VVIPs was carrying polished diamonds worth lakhs of rupees to Singapore when he was caught. Other equally important cases have come to light. Some of the close relatives of big traders are reported to be on the list of Interpol. An enforcement officer told SUNDAY that the diamond trade is so well-known for its hawala transactions that they were happy when they closed for the one day bandh against the alleged maltreatment meted out to Mr Shah. He hoped the diamond merchants would shut their establishments for a lifetime and save the country and its economy which is in a shambles because of these people and their like.

Olga Tellis



Running 2500 miles for charity

Darjeeling: Two adventurous brothers from Cumbria, UK. Richard (29) and Adrian Crane (28) are now running along the rugged Himalayan mountainside after having set out on 18 March from Darjeeling on their 2,500-mile soul-stirring odvssey to raise funds for charity. They will run 25 miles (slightly less than the standard marathon distance) every day for 100 days before they pant to a halt at Rawalpindi. Awe-struck by the incredible challenge the Crane brothers have undertaken, people here have started offering special prayers and lighting butter lamps to evoke the blessing of Lord Buddha as Richard and Adrian trot along the old Buddhist trail. Aptly enough, they were flagged off from the Himalavan Mountaineering Institute by none other than the Everest hero. Tensing Norgay, the very epitome of the dauntless spirit of man

"We have been waiting for this moment for a long time. If we fail, we hope some others will pick up from where we leave," they said and rustled down the serpentine road to the postoffice to post picture cards to then parents and girl friends. The longest sponsored marathon run along the undulating terrain, is to raise money for the proposed \$250,000 tund for the London-based charity organisation, Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) which imparts free advice on appropriate technology to developing countries. ITDG has distributed 15,000 sponsorship forms to collect donations for this "unique challenge to help a unique charity". The cost of the marathon is, however, being borne by the brothers themselves with equipment aid like shoes and bird feather-stuffed duvet downs from some commercial firms which intend to test the quality of their products. "We will pay back for their kindness by posing for advertisement shots later," they said.

On their way, the Crane brothers will pass through Pokhra, Jumla, Almora, Dehradun, Simla, Manalı, Leh, Kargil, Srinagar, Gilgit and Shardun before reaching their destination, Rawalpindi. They will run as close as possible to the ridge line of the Himalayas at an average feet . The 12.000 height of altitude variation will be trom 200 feet to 20,000. Starting at the footbill of Kanchenjunga which is the easterly-most peak in the Himalayan range, the dare-devils will run west along the base of all the 14 peaks of 8,000 metres and higher before reaching Nanga Parbat which is the



The Crane brothers: unique challenge

westerly-most peak. "They will follow ancient trade routes and Buddhist trails through Rhododendron forests, past glaciers and into isolated valleys and raging rivers. They will pass through hill markets and tropical forests, high altitude mountain passes, monasteries and tea

houses. They will encounter Sherpa families, Buddhist monks and lonely Yak herdsmen; coming finally, through the fruit orchards of the Hunza valley, to their ultimate destination," says the ITDG sponsorship form. Initially, Richard and Adrian themselves felt in October last year that "the idea of running the Himalayas was outright ludicrous." After months of investigating, charting their courses and weighing possibilities on clipboard, they reduced it to a "reasonable objective." They were taken for "nuts" by the ITDG offi-cials who, like a benign doctor referring patients to a psychiatrist, sent them over to the Royal Geographical Society (RGS). The RGS confirmed the ITDG diagnosis but said that if the expedition was at all possible these two were the right kind of

Richard and Adrian are carrying 5.3 kg of bare essentials including knife, camera and tent in two rucksacks each. They will eat daal-bhaat in villages and drink plenty of tea: mountain streams will provide water which they will treat with purifying tablets. They could do without food for two days, but will need at least six littes of water daily. If there is an emergency, "We just hope that both of us shall not be down with debilitating infection or roll down a precipice" so that at least one could bring help for the other. They have left extra equipment with temples and travel agencies in Kathmandu, Manah, Leh and Srinagar. They will collect in their logbook, the signatures of the headmen of every village they pass through.

Tapash Mukherjee

NFC: Health hazard complex

Secunderabad: At a civil liberties meeting held in Hyderabad on 17 March, attention was focussed on the serious health hazards faced by workers in the city's Nuclear Fuels Complex (NFC). A paper prepared by an activist doctor and circulated on the occasion, gave full details of the total lack of protection from radiation and other hazards at the NFC, the accidents that have taken place in the complex, and the complete indifference of the authorities when these matters have been brought to their notice. The paper also details the serious environmental pollution from radioactivity and poisonous effluents which pose a threat to all people living near the complex.

Workers in the uranium oxide plant at NFC are not being regularly supplied with rubber gloves and facemasks and are thus frequently exposed to radiation. Chlorine leakage is a danger to eyesight and the respiratory tract, while inadequate temperature control is having damaging effects on fertility. The wives of some workers have had frequent abortions, a consequence known to be linked with the sub-fertility of the sperm. Accidents have occurred, with workers, who inhaling toxic fumes of nitrates and sulphur dioxide, have had to be hospitalised. A large number of workers are suffering from chronic chest pain and bronchial complaints—effects of being exposed to noxious fumes over a period of time.

It is amazing, therefore, that no regular medical check-ups are being undertaken to monitor the health of workers as required by international norms for employees of hazardous nuclear industries. Nor is the health physics unit able to impose strict safety regulations since it has no independent authority. It is expected that two civil liberties groups will take up the demand for the protection of NFC workers from health hazards. Activists who spoke at the 17 March meeting pointed out that exposure of workers to health dangers by indifferent and callous authorities needs to be taken up as a human rights issue.

Vimal Balasubrahmanyan







The Name to Watch.

A new trend in time

RICOH QUARTZ

JAPAN

LOOKING GLASS

Some people's suspi-

cions were aroused when

DMK chief M. Karuna-

nidhi praised the con-

clave of the southern

CMs. Normally, if MGR

is around, Karunanıdhı

can only spew vitriolic

censure. He is incapable

of unstinted praise of

any issue in which MGR

is involved. As it turns

out, this particular acco-

Southern CMs' forum: victory for NBR-NTR cold war the DMK



ceuncul.

lade is not only qualified but actually boils down Karunanidhi: taking credit to self-praise: "The southern CMs' conference constitutes yet another relestone of victory for the DMK because it is the OMK that originally made the demand for state nutenomy and composite government at the centre. Mr Karunanichi reminded the people that it was the DMK pregrament that had moved a resolution in the state Assembly demanding self-government in the state and a composite government at the centre. Just to irritate M/R he has 'sincerely' suggested that the recommendations of the Rajamannar Committee, which he had instituted in 1970 to study aspects of centre-state relations, should form the Magna Carta of the CMs'

Is Congress(I) going to win the Kanakpura seat?

The Congress(I) is determined to give Mr Ramakrishna Reple a tough fight in the Kanakpura Assembly hyelection which the Karnataka CM is contesting. Mr. Hegde has been banking heavily on the Vokkaliga votes to win the election. And the Congress(I) in a bid to wean away the Vokkaliga votes has decided to put up Mr S.M. Krishna, a minister of state in the centre and a powerful Vokkaliga, to fight against Mr Hegde. Chances are that Mr Krishna may soon be turned into an unemployed politician.

Minister's wrath forces secretary to quit

The joint secretary in the department of textiles (commerce ministry), Mr Ajit Mukherjee, is shortly expected to quit his post and go back to his home state. West Bengal. Reason: Mr Mukherjec has incurred the wrath of the commerce minister, Mr V.P. Singh. Mr Singh is, according to sources in Udyog Bhavan, taking him to task for having failed to take action against some of the irregularities in the textiles committee on sub-standard export of textiles to Russia. Reports from Udyog Bhavan indicate that Mr Mukherjee sat on the report which had pointed out the irregularities.

Mr Mukherjee's departure is in sharp contrast to his predecessor Mr Zutshi's departure; he had to quit his post because he tried to set matters right in the textile committee when Mr Shivraj Patil was the commerce minister. Mr V.P. Singh has also decided to take action against the textile committee for which he will consult the legal department, as the committee is a statutory body.

hots up

Nadendla Bhaskar Rao (NBR), Andhra Pradesh's finance minister is a genius in juggling figures, especially where the budget is concerned. On two different occasions, NBR provided two sets of figures regarding the interim budget to the members of the state Assembly. In reply to a question in the Assembly, NBR said that Andhra Pradesh had to take an overdraft of Rs 8.09 crores in 1980-81, Rs 37.79 crores in 1981-82 and Rs 138.86 in 1982-83. Between 2 and 14 March of this year, the state's overdraft was Rs. 48.86 crores. But he said that the entire overdraft would be wiped out because of the Telugu Desam government's economy drive. In fact, said Mr Bhaskara Rao, the overdraft figure would come down to Rs 30 crores on 16 March.

But on 15 March he did a volte face. Replying in the interim budget debate. NBR said that the state government had an overdraft of Rs 102 crores. Then why had NBR quoted the other figures? Was it NBR's method of humiliating the Desam government because of his cold war with NTR?

Bureaucrats being shuffled around

Not only has Mrs Gandhi been shuffling her miristers around by changing their portfolios, the bureauc rats in Delhi too have been kept on their toes. There are strong rumours floating around in North Block that Mr V.B. Easwaran and Mr M. Narasimhan would shortly be asked to leave their posts, as secretaries in the finance ministry. But where they would be going is still not known. However, Mr R. Ganapati, now a secretary in the department of mines was tipped to take over from Mr Easwaran. At the last minute, according to the grapevine, Mr Ganapati was told to stay on at his post, in spite of the fact that he had already cleared his desk of his personal belongings Reason: the minister in charge of the ministry, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, aid not want Mr Ganapati in his ministry.

Karunakaran will not yield an inch from Kerala

Kerala CM Mr K. Karunakaran has made it very clear that the state would not allow even an inch of its territory to be claimed by another state. His vehemence was a reaction to the Tamil Nadu revenue minister, Mr S.D. Somasundaram's reported statement that the Devicolam and Peermade areas (lying on the Tamil Nadu-Kerala border) belonged to Tamil Nadu. It



Karunakaran: quid pro quo

was pointed out in the Kerala Assembly that if the Tamil Nadu government insisted on raking up border disputes. Kerala would then demand the handing over of Shencottah and Kanyakumari, both of which had, been part of the erstwhile state of Travancore.



GIHE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat



Tamanna: lost in the dark

emember Tamanna? Nhe was one of the promising actresses of the early Seventies. It took her just a few films to tell the world that she was much more than what many thought she was. With Rajinder Singh Bedi's Namaaz she proved that she was more than just a good actress. She had expected more offers but nothing like that happened. She even used Dharmendra and her imaginarỳ affair with him (she is as old as his daughter) to boost her career. Nothing worked and Tamanna found satisfaction in marrying a film publicist who was wellknown to the stars she always wanted to be close to. Tamanna is a married woman now. Tamanna the actress has died a natural death.

Anita: unquestionable love



Angry letters keep coming to Smita Patil. They are letters from fans who care, fans who want her to continue being a good actress. The fans do not want her to take roles in films like *Namak* Halaal, Shakti, Badle Ki Aag, Tajurbe and the recently released Chatpatee. They are not willing to accept her as a "disgusting decoration piece" as one fan put it very bluntly, "I am an actress and feel it is my duty to play all kinds of roles to mature as an actress. I did Jabbar Patil's Umbartha and I did Chatpatee for Deven Varma. They were two different roles and I enjoyed doing them. They were challenging roles, each in its own way. I don't want to get typed as an actress," Smita explains.

mitabh Bachchan's 🕰 special appearance in Andhaa Kaanoon is what many are eagerly waiting to see. It is supposed to be "a very special and very surprisingly special appearance" in a role which is more powerful than some of the roles he has done. Most of the shooting was done after he recovered. From the way he has gone about them is unbelievable especially those people who have watched him shot in Madras.

But whatever neight hapall the other actresses, small or big, that have come into Dharmendra's hectic life, he goes on. Dharmendra is still playing the young man and the loyer in a number of films. He is also acting opposite Anita Raaj, who is as old as his daughter. In fact, his acting in a film with Anita has even led to the rumour that he is having a "royal affair" with her and the best the two can do is to laugh about the whole affair. "Tell me, how can I have an affair with someone I have looked up to as a father figure in all these years? Yes, I love Dharami but my love is the kind of love that very few can understand," says Anita.



Radhika: congratulations

R adhika and Pratap Pothen gave a real surprise by going and getting married. Technically it is supposed to be a secret wedding but everybody knows about it. What was secretive about it was that Radhika never whispered a word about it to her mother. In fact, she got married the day after her mother left for London. Pratap and Radhika solemnised their longstanding love affair in the church, with a few film friends that included Saritha and Bharati Raja. Even some of the Telugu film producers with whom Radhika is very close were not aware of the imminent marriage. Pratap Pothen himself didnot breathe a word to anyone even the day before. There is a lot of snide remarks in the air about how Pratap decided to marry Radhika only because he hopes she will boost his sagging career.

A huge cut of Rajnikanth has been
erected in one of the nodal
points of Madras city. The
cut out is an unbelievable
80 feet in height. Obviously Rajnikanth is scaling
new heights in filmdom,
having outstripped even
MGR. The tallest cutout
ever of celluloid king
MGR never went beyond
50 feet.

Culakshna is very much on the defensive these days because of mounting criticism that she is exposing her body too much for the sake of her career. According to her, some roles demand a bit of exposure and it is not a reflection of the heroine's lack of merals. It only shows that she is very professional. Explains Sulakshna, "When there is a rain sequence or when I have to jump into a river, naturally my clothes get wet. It is not my fault. And just for the sake of one scene I cannot refuse a role which is otherwise very good." She even goes to the extent of claiming that she makes it a point to examine the clothes she has to wear for a particular shor and that if she finds it to be too skimpy or transparent she refuses to wear it.

Krishna was recently injured during a shooting scene in Ooty. Some dummy bombs burst injuring him in the chest and arm. After what happened to Amitabh, nobody dared to take any risk and immediately rushed him to the hospital. Now everybody can heave a sign of relief because Krishna has recovered and is back in action.

65



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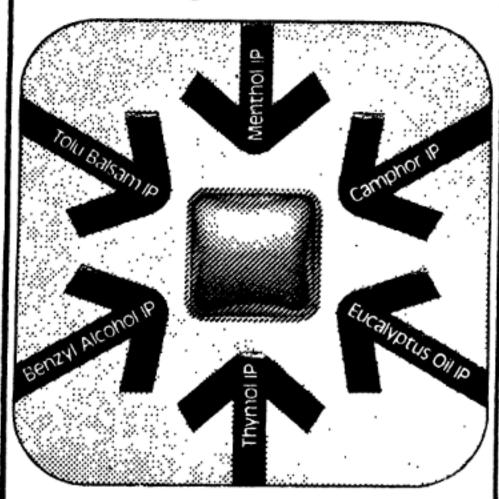


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ULKA-VOC-12



ARIES (15 April---14 May) A very favourable week for those in romance. However, for those wanting to marry, opposition may crop

up from unseen quarters, specially your parents. Those of you who are in business are advised not to make any new financial investments. Professionals, do not get into unnecessary squabbles with your superiors.

Good dates: 10, 12 and 14. Lucky numbers: 1, 6 and 9. Favourable direction: South.

TAURUS (15 May-14 June) This week begins on a promising note in the domestic sphere. Before going ahead with any plans, be they regarding your studies, or occupation, or even marriage, it is advisable to consult your elders. Avoid getting into disputes or altercations with your colleagues, and keep a safe distance from new acquaintances. A transfer or a promotion is in store for those in service.

Good dates: 11, 13 and 15. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: Northeast.

GEMINI (15 June---14 July) If you curb your obstinate ntendencies and lay more emphasis on congeniality, then your affairs are likely to make rapid progress. You will then earn the respect of not only your family

but also your employers. On the domestic front, this is likely to be a favourable week. Businessmen, avoid making new deals. A very favourable week for those in romance.

Good dates: 12, 14 and 16. Lucky numbers: 2, 3 and 7. Favourable direction: West.



CANCER (15 July-14 August) This week is likely to be full of problems. Lawsuits and debts will be sources of great anxiety.

Businessmen, you are advised to be a little tight-fisted in your financial dealings. Guard the health of your close ones, specially your mother or sister. This is not a favourable week for romance. Times are hard, but do not lose your patience.

Good dates: 10, 13 and 15. Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: North.

LEO (15 August-14 September) This is going to be a (c) lucky week for you. The domestic scene will be a happy one. Your friends

will prove helpful Businessmen, you are likely to make profits. For most of you, a letter will bring good tidings. Professionals may be rewarded—a promotion is in the offing. Travel is also very likely.

Good dates: 11, 13 and 16. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 8 Favourable direction: South-west

VIRGO (15 September—14 October) This is a week when professionals will make much headway provided they are diligent and

sincere. Husbands and housewives, your are advised to exercise vigilance in financial matters. Children will do well in their studies. Students and research scholars, bring out your creative abilities to the fore and in so doing you will gain confidence in yourselves.

Good dates: 10, 11 and 12. Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 5 Favourable direction: East.



完LIBRA (15 October—14 November) This week, the domestic front will be very peaceful and happy.

Favours will come in from friends and relatives. The financial horizon is very bright-your debts will be cleared. Businessmen, speculative ventures will yield good results. You are advised not to venture out on your own, especially in creative or research fields. A very favourable week for romance.

Good dates: 12, 14 and 15. Lucky numbers: 3, 6 and 9. Favourable direction: Southeast



SCORPIO (15 November—14 December) This is going to be a hectic week for you. Your financial problems will be solved. Avoid getting

into unnecessary squabbles. You are advised to be firm and resolute. Elders and relatives will be helpful, so utilise them to the best of your advantage. A very favourable week for matrimonial affairs.

Good dates: 10, 13 and 14. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: Northeast.

SAGITTARIUS (15 December--14 January) This is going to be a moderately favourable week for you, Though a problem might

nag you persistently. On the domestic front, your children will do well in their studies. Professionals, your employers will face labour problems . bands, the health of your wives will worry you.

Good dates: 11, 12 and 13. Lucky numbers: 4, 6 and 8. Favourable direction: North.



CAPRICORN (15 January---14 February) Professionals, bad times are in the offing. Your may also lose a few valued friends. For house-

holders, difficulties may arise on the financial front. Property matters may be subject to considerable strain. Businessmen, you are advised to forego gambling and speculation. Lawsuits should be handled very carefully. A good week for travel.

Good dates: 11, 14 and 16. Eucky numbers: 1, 2 and 3. Favourable direction: South



AQUARIUS (15 February---14 March) You will have to be extra vigilant this week. Professionals, you are advised to maintain good

relations with your superiors. Avoid getting into tiffs with your colleagues. Lawsuits and property cases will entail heavy expenditure. Keep a close watch on your finances. Those of your who are in love may be disappointed, for your secret love affair will end abruptly.

Good dates: 14, 15 and 16. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 8. Favourable direction: West.



PISCES (15 March—14 April)

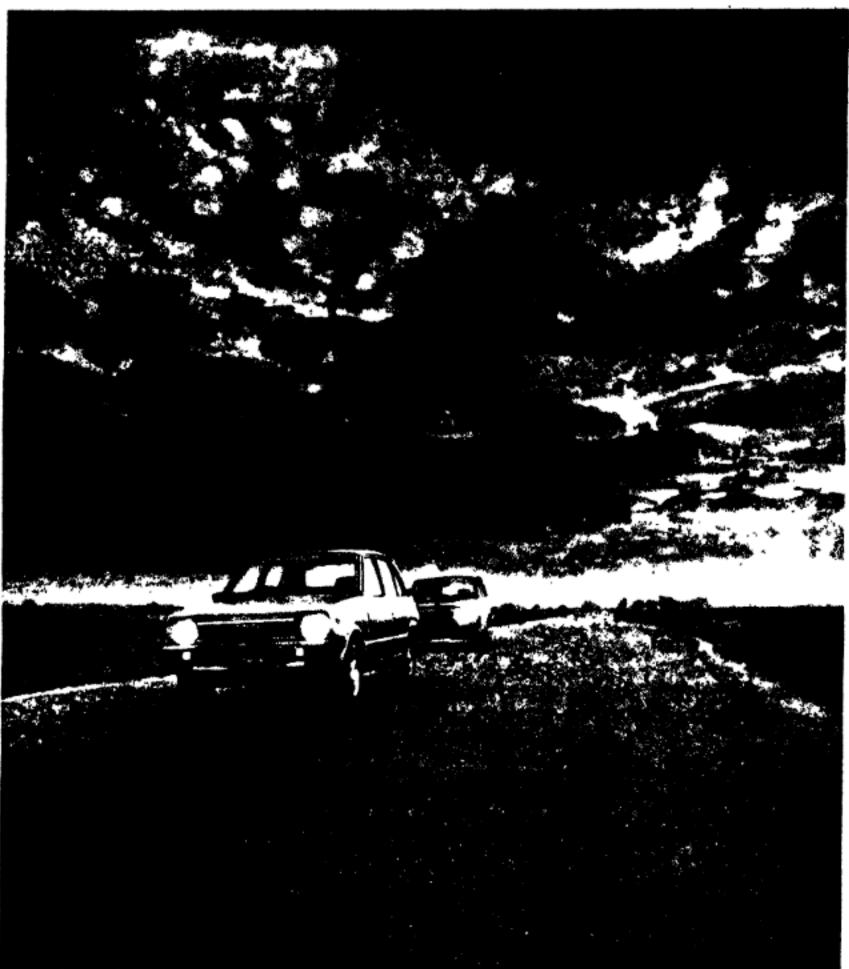
This week will see you making slow but steady progress. Help will come in from unexpected sources.

Professionals, a promotion awaits you. Matters related to property and insurance are well-signified. Sportsmen will be successful in their efforts provided they give themselves wholeheartedly to the pursuit of their fields.

Good dates: 10, 11 and 15. Lucky numbers: 7, 8 and 9. Favourable direction: Northwest.

Those born on Thursdays: Most of you are very sober and have a high degree of social sensitivity. You are also religious in your . disposition and hence are inclined towards the priestly profes-

sion. You are lovers of nature The zest for life in you is always present. You also devote yourselves wholeheartedly to your profession and will therefore be successful.



In the second service personnel in Japan. A senior technical director from Suzuki will train production and service personnel in Japan. A senior technical director from Suzuki will to be present to help maintain the international standards of Suzuki's customer service. Fact: in a single sweep, Maruti will bring about a revolution on wheels. It's already begun.

MARUTI UDYOG LIMITED

This Andia



NEW DELHI: An astropalmist at Ashoka Hotel has free run of the place despite the heavy security cordon which has kept guests and visitors out. This is because many visiting dignitaries and senior officials have already met or have been asked to meet the astropalmist Mr R. Ramakrishnasarathy. Among his clients are Emirs, Kings and Presidents. The dignitaries believe that Mr Sarathy can tell better because of a whole string of correct predictions made by the astropalmist. To name a few are the date and duration of the 1971 Indo-Pak war, Princess Beatrix's ascending the throne, the fall of President Nixon, the death of Pope Paul I, the fall of Mr Malcolm Fraser and the election of Mr Bob Hawke as Prime Minister of Australia-Statesman (Dandapani Panda, Bhubaneswar)

NEW DELHI: You can buy an insurance cover for travelling without tickets in suburban trains in Bombay, said Mr Viswajit P. Singh (Cong-I) in the Rajya Sabha. The member said he had learnt from reliable sources that a company was selling such an insurance cover at the rate of Rs 5/- per passenger per month. If a person so insured was caught travelling without a ticket, he could recover the fine he paid from the insurance company. Mr Singh said the company was more than adequately covered and was making lakhs and lakhs of rupees-Times of India (V. Radhakrishnan, Madras)

BELGAUM: How do you tame a woman who turns out to be a shrew and a real pain on our neck, especially so if she is your mother-in-law? A newly married youth seemed to know the right way to keep his troublesome mother-in-law away from meddling with his affairs when he allegedly chopped off her nose.—Indian Express (Lalitha Ananthunarayanan, Hubli)

WARANGAL: Mada Latchi, a Lambada woman, delivered a baby in an R.T.C. village bus on the outskirts of Bollikunta village near the city this morning. The mother and the new-born are safe. The woman who hails from Pedda Tanda in Wardhannpet samiti, waited the whole night under a tree at the Parbathagiri primary health centre which remained closed. With no prospect of the PHC opening today, Latchi along with relatives boarded Warangal-bound bus even as she developed birth pains. The bus was stopped after crossing Bollikunta and the passengers vacated as Latchi delivered a girl—Indian Express (Syed Hussain, Kurnool)

BOMBAY: You may not believe it, but it is true. Electric locomotives of long distance trains of the Western Railway run at a stretch of 200 metres without power. As the trains reach Virar, the suburban terminal in the north, the locomotives lower the pantography and raise it again at Veterna where a switch over takes place from direct current operating from Churchgate to Virar to alternate current. The railway authorities faced this problem in 1970 when they took up electrification from Virar to Ahmedabad on the Bombay-Delhi trunk route. Railway officials here said the problem was overcome with a simple solution—keeping the track between Virar to Veterna "dead." It was found that the trains can go ahead on their own momentum-Amrita Bazar Patrika (S. M. Fakhrullah, Gomoh, Bihar)

GANDHINAGAR: A man who was involved in a dacoity in Vachlibit village in Baroda district on the night of 24 February has got himself recruited in the police force but is now in police custody. The Gujarat home minister, Mr Prabodh Rawal told the state Assembly on 5 March that the man was removed from the police force after his role in the dacoity came to be known. The sarpanch of the village was arrested after part of the looted property was seized from him, Mr Rawal said—Statesman (A. L. Rawal, New-Delhi)

BOMBAY: The working housewives have little time to spare. Yet the accommodation problem forces them to travel long distances to their place of work, taking away so much precious time. Many have wisely made use of it to catch up on their needlework. Tick-a-tack go knitting needles. But the latest occupation in the ladies compartment of the city's suburban railway is a pointer to the pressure of time on the womenfolk. Many who buy vegetables for the evening meal on the way to the station, now carry kitchen knives in their bags so that the vegetables are cut and ready for cooking by the time they alight-Times of India (C.D. Thakur, Bombay)

Without Comment

This is not the time for displaying numerical strength. When the time comes, I will show who is popular and who is not—S. Bangarappa in *Probe*

I feel jealous of the people of Karnataka for having such an efficient chief minister—M.G. Ramachandran

I do not believe in populist slogans or measures. Something concrete needs to be done-Ramakrishna Hegde

The government should pay full attention to genuine religious demands of Hindus. It was negotiating on religious demands of other communities and there was no reason that the Hindus should be taken for granted by it—Dr Karan Singh, president of the Virat Hindu Samaj

Let us poor nations of the world unite. We have nothing to lose but our poverty—Julius Jayewardene, President of Sri Lanka

Unless the non-aligned nations regain their unity and become truly independent from both East and West, there will never be solutions to world problems—Javier Perez de Cuellar, secretary general of the United Nations

Both on domestic and international policy 1 would consider the governments of Mrs Thatcher and Mr Reagan to be a step back—John Kenneth Galbraith interviewed in South



Think of her as the F-15 of tennis. Like that prodigious US fighter plane, Martina Navratilova embodies the state of the art, the ultimate in technical refinement and combat performance—Life

The past is a country from where we have all emigrated—Salman Rushdie in Sunday Observer

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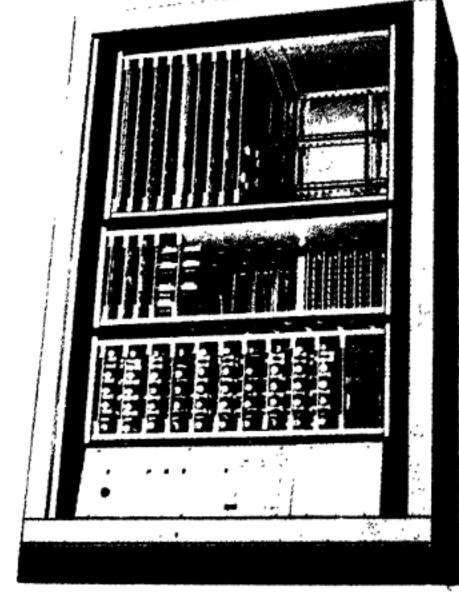
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Chess

Portisch (Black)



Karpov (White) to move

Having written some time ago about Portisch's lamentable record against Karpov, I was pleased to see fate intervening on behalf of equity. Either that or Portisch read my column. The words had hardly rolled off the presses when Portisch finally overcame his jinx to beat Karpov for the first time in 10 years, with Black to boot.

You may have noticed that the only way

to reverse a trend is to report it as a fact. Observations by Jim Laker that England are batting well on a good wicket are invariably greated by the uprooting of Botham's middle stump. But for the insistence of Moscow radio, Western civilisation probably would fall apart at the seams. Perhaps I too should try to harness this phenomenon to good effect by asserting that Karpov will beat Korchnoi again in 1984. White: Karpov. Black: Portisch Petrov Defence.

Tilburg 1982 1 P-K4 P-N-KB3 N-KB3 N-KB3 NxP 3 NxP B-Q3 B-K2 5 P-Q4 8 R-K1 B-KB4 7 0-0 N-QB3 9 P-84 10 B-B1 PxP N-QN5 Varying from an earlier game which I published where Portisch played 10 . . 0-0 and lost. Nevertheless 10 . . . 0-0 is the right move as Karpov produces a real bombshell, no doubt prepared from his homework on their last encounter.

11 N-B31 for if 11 . . .NxN 12 PxN N-B7 13 R-K5 NxR 14 RxB and the knight is trapped, or here 12 . . . N-Q6 13 BxN and B-R3 winning.

11 . . . N-KB3
Hardly any choice, but it leaves White firmly in the driving seat.

12 BxP 0-0 13 P-QR3 N-B3

14 P-Q5 N-R4 15 B-R2 P-B4 16 B-N5 R-K1 17 Q-R4 B-Q2 18 Q-B2 P-KR3 19 B-R4
Not in itself a mistake, but it does allow Black to make something of a mess of the position. After 19 B-KB4 White's domination of the board is unchallengable.

19 . . . NxP The only chance. 20 NxN BxB

BxB 21 RxR+ BxR

22 Q-K47!
The beginning of a wild goose chase. White still has an enduring initiative after 22 QxP or 22 R-Q1.

22 . . . B-KB3 23 B-N1? DIAGRAM
Very superficial. True White threatens mate
in two and 23 . . . P-KN3 is refuted by 24
QxB+, but Black has a telling defence.
23 K-B1!

23 . . . K-B1 I
Simple but effective. We now see that
White has imprisoned his QR for no reason
and is still to recover his pawn.
24 Q-R7

A rather desperate piece sacrifice which Portisch refutes codity and clinically.

24 . . . QxN 25 B-K4 Q-Q3 26 Q-R8+ K-K2 27 B-82 N-B3 28 B-R4 N-Q5

An instructive finish, returning the piece to secure himself a winning attack. 29 NxN BxN 30 R-K1+ K-B31

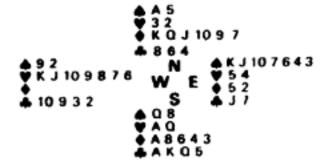
31 BxB Or 31 RxB Q-B51 and wine. 31 . . . Q-B5 32 R-B1 Q-K4 33 Resigns.

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

You people who write about the game, said a friend – well, former friend – at the club, don't know what goes on at all. Just look at the number of mistakes that were made on this hand. He wrote it down, being careful, I noted, about the small cards.

Dealer West N-S vulnerable



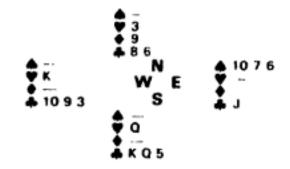
The bidding, with former friend sitting North, was reasonable enough:

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| _ | 3 ♥ | No | No |
| 3NT | No | 4 • | No |
| 5 • | No | 5NT | No |
| 6NT | No | No | No |

West led the 9 of spades. There is

certainly one way to make the contract: take the Ace of spades, run the diamonds and, if West keeps all his clubs, throw him in and force a lead to the A Q of hearts. However, South played a low spade from dummy, East won and returned a heart, which South had to win.

South set about the diamonds and on an early round East completed an echo in hearts 'to give you the count', as he explained to his partner afterwards. Declarer came to hand with a club, cashed the Ace of hearts, and ran the rest of the diamonds, arriving at this position



You see that East's heart discard has brought North's ♥ 3 into the game? On the last diamond South threw the Queen of hearts and West the King. And then, of course, South led a club from dummy.

TERENCE REESE

Stamp



The Bayeux tapestry portrays Duke William of Normandy as cleanshaven and with a good head of hair reaching well down his forehead. Some of the silver pennies minted after his accession to the English throne give him a moustache, the only distinctive feature which the moneyers were skilled enough to depict in their stereotyped royal portraits. It is on one of these silver pennies that the portrait on this 35-cents stamp from the West Indian island of Barbuda is based. The stamp is one of a series of 37 portraying English and British monarchs from William I to Victoria.

C. W. HILL

Quiz

QUESTIONS

 Who were the perpetrators of the My Lai massacre of 1968?

2. Who was Kalapahar?

3. The KGB is one of the two Soviet organisations responsible for order and security. Which is the other?

4. In cinema shooting parlance, what is a salad?

What intentions would a card-player have in mind if he had a cold deck?

inside a camera.

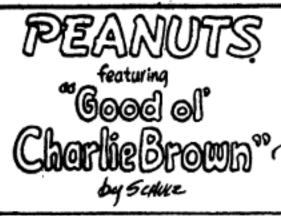
5. Cheating, since a cold deck is a pack or deck of cards secretly arranged in a desired order.

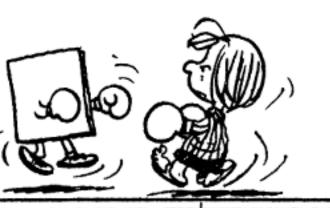
4. A camera fault when film piles up

2. A general serving under Sulaiman Kararani (1565-72) of Bengal.
3. The MVD.

 Lt William Calley and his immediate superior, Captain Emest Medina of the United States Army, along with their troops massacred the entire population of the South Vietnamese village, thinking at was a stronghold of the Vietcong.

YNSMERS.





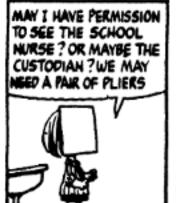










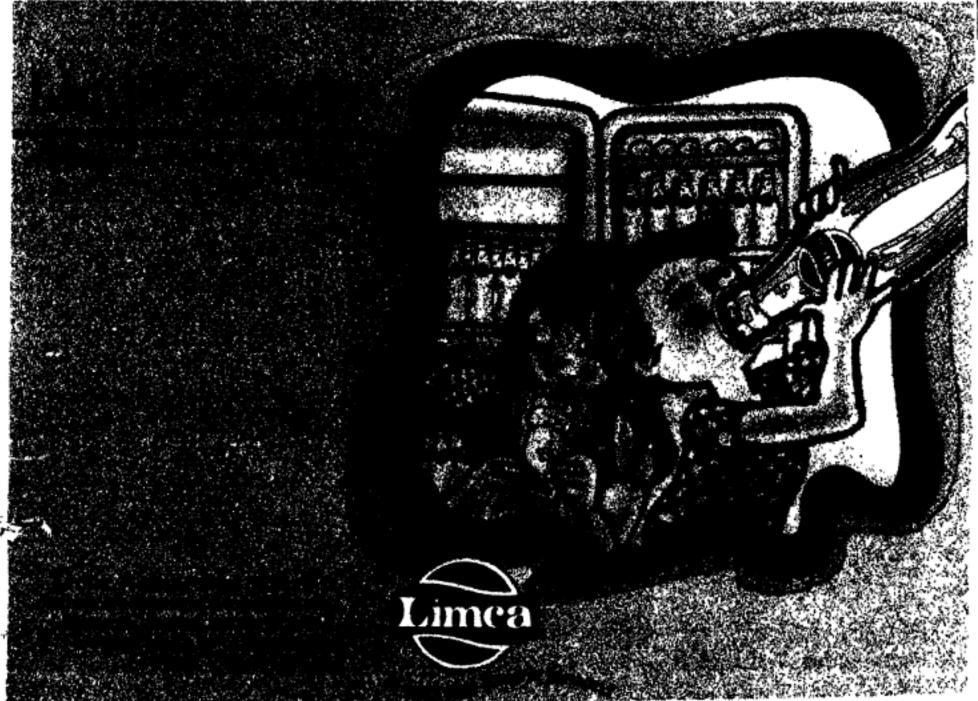












GEN. ERSHAD'S INDIAN FRIEND

DURING his stay in India for the NAM, the Bangladesh President Gen. Ershad went on an evening visit to a house in a South Delhi colony. The purpose of the President's visit was subject of much speculation. The President was, in fact, paying a courtsey call on an old friend, who had been his batchmate in the National Defence College. (Gen. Ershad had visited the prestigious institution in New Delhi in the Seventies as a Bangladesh army officer.) The old friend was none other than Mr Jaspal Singh, the controversial police commissioner of Baroda Mr Singh was on leave and spent almost a week in the capital during the Non-Aligned Summit.



Gen. Ershad: visiting friends

MAN VS MACHINE

A sidelight of the Non-Aligned Summit which has come to light now makes the electronics age look stupid. Ms Penny, the British expert hired by the government for providing secretarial and translation facilities, was amazed to find that the automatic collation machine imported by her failed against the speed of the Indian peons. Ms Penny had hired electronic equipment from abroad at a very high cost. But when her automatic collation machine was unable to provide the sets of the docu-

ments fast enough, an irate Indian official offered the services of his trained peons. Thereafter, the British lady decided to depend on manual collation.. In India, electronics seems to be destined to bow down to man. During the Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka elections, the young managers of the Congress(I) had relied heavily on the computer which they installed at 1, Akbar Road (attached to the PM's residence) to gauge the peoples' But the results mood. proved otherwise.

DELAYED FELICITATION

THE resolution congratulating Mrs Gandhi on her becoming the chairperson of NAM (the Non-Aligned Meet) which was adopted by the Lok Sabha on 22 March, had a chequered record. Initially, the ruling party had sought to have the resolution moved by the speaker, Mr Balram Jakhar, soon after the House reassembled after the recess for the NAM. But finding a lack of unanimity among the members, the speaker refused to oblige. Later, the move was brought forward as a private members' resolution by Mr Kamal Nath and Prof. K. K. Tewari of the Congress(I). Mr Nath had been a member of the Indian delegation to the summit. Before he could move the resolution Mr Harikesh Bahadur (DSP) light-heartedly asked the chair to allow him to move a resolution' congratulating Mr Kamal Nath. As he himself said, he was felicitating Mr Nath "for successfully manoeuvring the situation to get his name included in the delegation to NAM."



Balram Jakhar: congratulatory resolution

MINISTER WITHOUT A FLAT

THE commerce minister, Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, has failed to get an official bungalow despite being sworn in two months ago. He continues to live in his private flat in a South Delhi colony. Two houses, occupied by former ministers, were allotted to Mr Singh, but neither of the former ministers want to vacate their bungalows. And the works and housing ministry does not have the courage to ask these ex-cabinet ministers, one of whom happens to be a former state chief minister as well, to leave their houses. Since the Congress(I) assumed power in January 1980, the normal rules pertaining to the allotment of bungalows were ignored. Seniority in the Parliament or status, like being a former minister, either in the centre or in the state, was not followed. As a result, several young first-term MPs, who normally would not have qualified for allotment of bungalows, got them. The result of the lop-sided policy is now being felt. Apart from new cabinet ministers, many senior officers, of the level of secretaries, are being denied their due accommodation as bungalows are not available.

SUNNY DAYS AHEAD?

THE capital is agog with rumours about an impending mid-term poll. The grapevine started buzzing after successive deficit state budgets in the Congress(I)-ruled states were presented without any new taxes being levied. After that, word started circulating about a new scheme, nicknamed "Project Ten." What is "Project Ten"? No, it is no substitute for the Prime Minister's 20-point programme (neither the old nor the revised one). It is said to be simply aimed at collecting party funds. And the target is put at Rs 750 crores, to be collected in 75 days, which makes the average collection to be at the rate of Rs 10 crores a day. The plan is aimed at collecting funds for the next Lok Sabha elections (there are 542 constituencies) and for keeping a ge. serve for the post-poll perious Apparently, the leaders of the party, which is involved in "Project Ten," are far-sighted. They think not only of the present but of the future as well. And they certainly believe in the dictum: Make hay while the sun shines.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN



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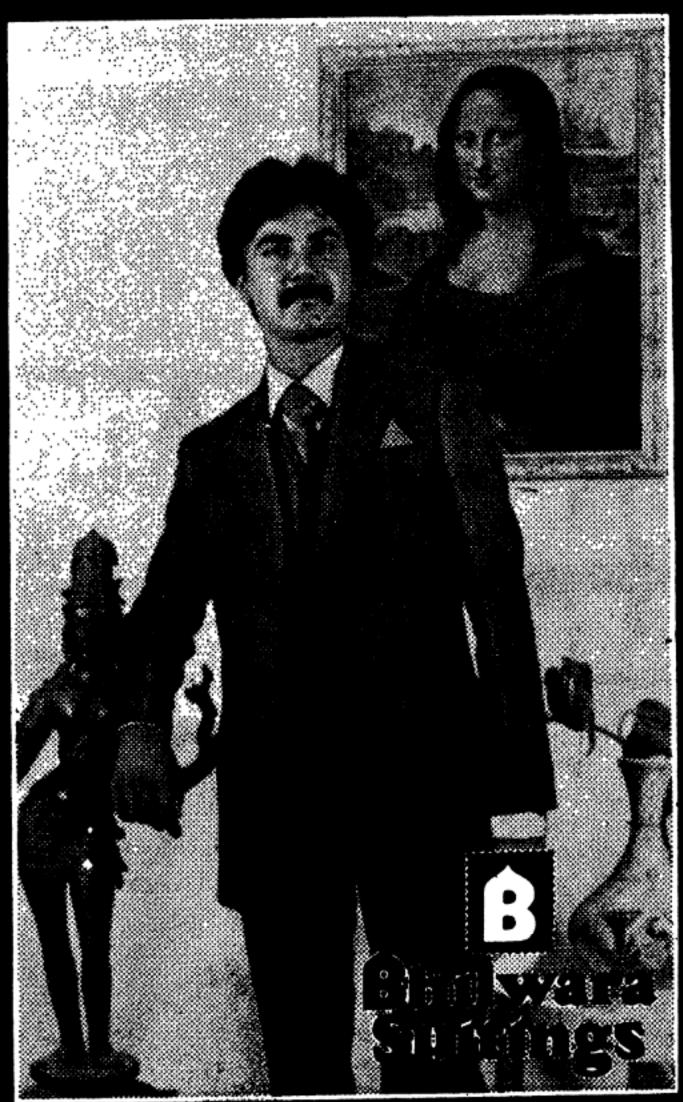
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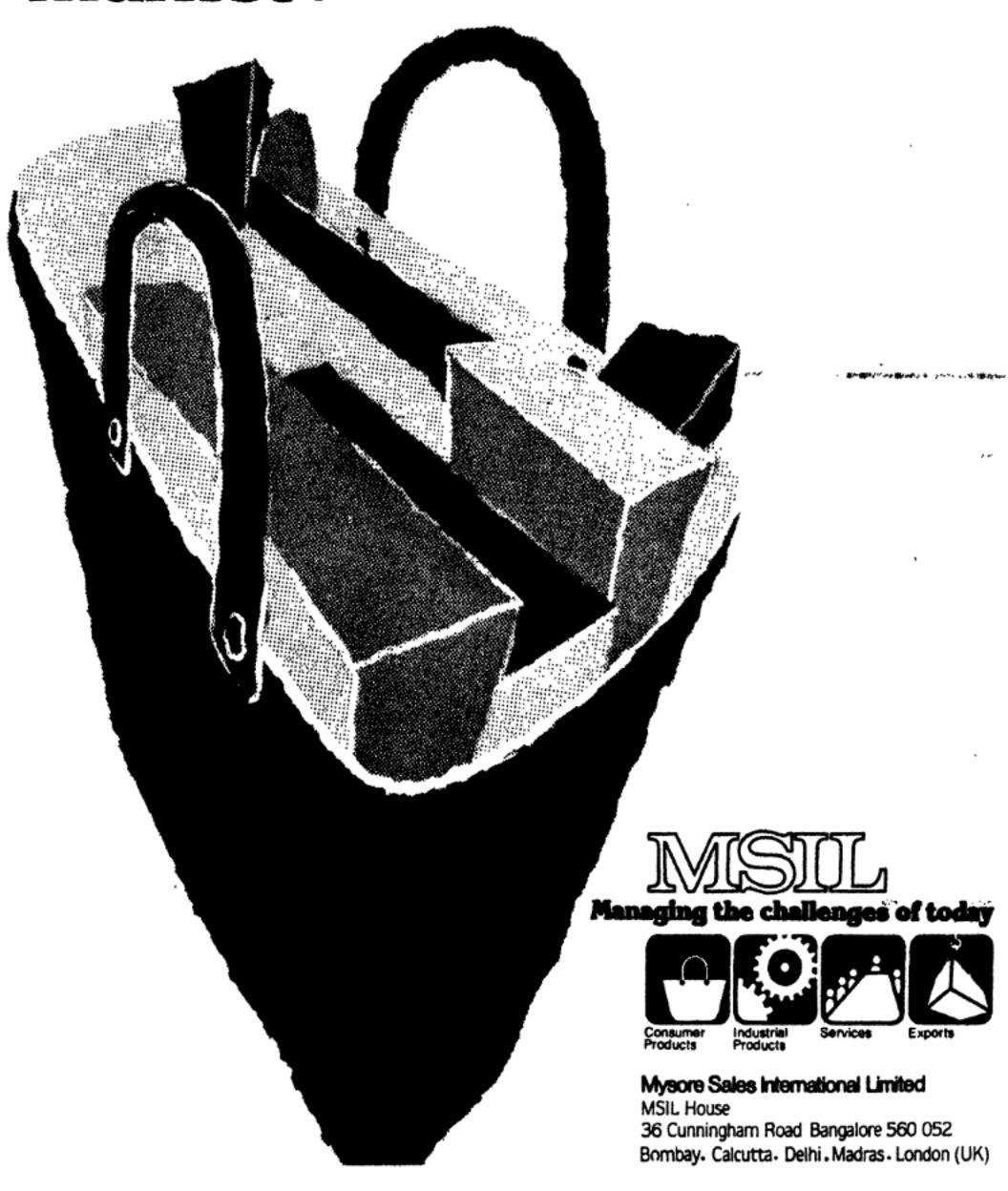
through its credible advertising, honest propositions and user benefits was able to win over its consumers. This resulted in helping stabilisation of detergent prices and more utility benefits.

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commitmentsmarket?





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The activities of the department of electronics of the government of India, which the Prime Minister heads, are shrouded in secrecy merely to hide the corruption that lies beyond it. Even ministers of state and deputy ministers assigned to this department have no access to certain information since a small band of officers who welld considerable clout with the PM have managed to keep the irregularities away from her. And, any minister who tries to unravel the mysteries in the department, as happened in the case of Mr C.P.N. Singh, is instantly removed from the department. Shubhabrata Bhattacharya investigates.

In a lengthy interview after being unceremoniously ousted from his post as executive editor of the *Indian Express* in November 1982, Arun Shourie speaks on investigative journalism, the reasons for his sacking, the troubles he faced with S. Nihal Singh and the chaotic state of the *Indian Express* management. Sunday reproduces this interview from *Facets*.









Four persons sentenced to death in 1978 for a string of heinous murders they committed in Pune are yet to be hanged. While citizens of Pune are becoming increasingly perturbed over the delay in the execution of the sentences, the accused have been sending petitions to various authorities to commute their death sentences to life imprisonment. Olga Tellis reports.

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Biased movement

The cover story, Faith, hope and charity (27 March) made interesting reading. The various problems facing the non-aligned nations were well analysed. The necessity of such summits cannot be underscored, since tension looms large over the world today. Shali Gram Singh, Chittaranjan.

Congratulations to SUNDAY for yet another brilliant cover story. The summit was well covered.

N. Gnanalingam, Tamil Nadu

R. D. Sinha, Calcutta

The cover story read more like a government handout. The whole summit was clothed in hypocrisy. The new chairperson, after raising her own country's defence budget, called for a global reduction of arms. Moreover, the USA was severely criticised at the meeting, whereas not a finger was raised against the Soviet Union. Mrs Gandhi defended the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan more effectively than President Castro could do at Havana. Sunday for once did resort to biased reporting.

Sunday failed to give its readers a balanced view of the seventh non-aligned summit. Like many other journals, it sang hymns in praise of Mrs Gandhi. The relevance of the non-aligned movement cannot be overlooked, but most of its members have aligned themselves to one superpower or the other. While one can understand declarations criticising the USA's role in West Asia, one fails to appreciate the silence maintained over the Soviet Union's presence in Afghanistan. This is nothing but double-dealing.

K. G. Jayaprakash, Chowghat (Kerala)

The non-aligned movement has lost its relevance. The member countries are under the shadow of the superpowers. S. M. Bagibillah, Calcutta

This has reference to Udayan Sharma's report, Irresponsible opposition. The author—rightly mentioned that the opposition parties like the Janata and the Lok Dal could have easily passed resolutions in favour of an effective, alert and strong non-aligned movement. Moreover, a constructive opposition is always helpful to any democratic process. It is a pity that the opposition in our country behaves in such a reckless, irresponsible fashion.

Saswata Ghosh, 24 Parganas (West Bengal)

When Udayan Sharma praised Mrs Gandhi for her clarity of concept vis-a-vis foreign policy, he was either una-ware of the pro-Moscow tilt in India's foreign policy or he too had joined the pro-Moscow lobby which is always vocal in its support for Mrs Gandhi's so-called non-aligned policies.

Mr Sharma's article made me feel that any opposition to this non-aligned movement is irresponsible. Instead of repeating time and again that everybody in India supports the movement, Mr Sharma should have given reasoned replies to the criticisms against the non-aligned movement. Ramendra, Patna

Kewal Varma's article, The war against Shylock, was biased. He condemned the USA for economic domination, but he did not utter a word against the Soviet Union Again, Mr Varma referred to the role of the USA in the UNCTAD, IMF and in the Brandt Commission, but he cleverly ignored the cause behind the USSR's boycott of these organisations. Mrs Gandhi functioned as a Soviet agent in the non-aligned meet

P Vasudevan, Howrah

Marvellous

Hats off to I. S. Johar for the lucid one-act play, Sare Jahan se achcha (27 March). The readers of SUNDAY would have been deprived of a really meaningful, hilarious piece of writing had it not been published Subreto Sengupta, Gingia.

1-S. Johar's is a marvellous play. Credit goes to Suspay for having published it. Adnan. Khalil, Aligarh

A fantastic play. Keep it up, SUNDAY. Ramachandra Tripathy, Madras

The subtle humour in Sare jahan se achcha made interesting reading. Please oblige us by persuading Mr Johar to contribute regularly, since he is the only person who seems to be ruthlessly frank

Nitin Nath Singh and Vinay Singh, Dhanbad

Mr Johar is neither an actor nor a joker He is a saint. From his filthy tongue flow "divine" truths.

C. J. M. Alberts, Gangtok (Sikkim)

1. S. Johan's play has proved the theory that filmstar-turned politicians rule the roost these days. I am afraid that after 1975, 1985 is coming soon—in other

words, we are going to have another

Emergency.

E Gorety, Keonjhar (Orissa)

Petty politics

Michael Dalvi's report, How they axed Dilip Doshi (20 March), was really absorbing. Since Gavaskar has now become famous for such axingsit will not be improper to call him Gavaxer.

C Sridhar, Madras

Michael Dalvi rightly exposed the treatment meted out to Doshi. I only hope that the report serves as an eyeopener for our biased selectors. It is time they realised Gavaskar's true character.

Suvas Chaudhuri, Asansol

Congratulations to Sunday for yet another brilliant report. It was really painful to learn that Doshi alone had to bear the builden of India's humiliating defeat in Pakistan. It was also surprising that the spent force, Venkat, replaced Dilip Doshi who is definitely at the peak of his career. I also wonder why Kiran More was preferred to other seasoned wicketkeepers like Surinder Khanna or S. Viswanath. This merely speaks of the state of affairs in Indian cricket.

Dharmendra Sinha Ray, Cuttack

Gavaskar's attitude towards Doshi in the recently concluded Indo-Pak series reflected the rift between the two players. In the second Test, Doshi was deliberately under-used. Even Asif Igbal commented after the Test that Gavaskar must have had personal reasons for not using Doshi. Such petty politics can only destroy Indian cricket. Soumitra Bhattacharyya, Gauhati

The decision to drop Dilip Doshi from the Caribbean tour was unjust. I wonder what Pankaj Roy was doing when the decision was taken. Was he a party to the 'remove Doshi campaign?' P. K. Mitra, Allahabad

It was Subhas Gupte who captured 149 Test wickets and not Subhas Gupta as mentioned. Moreover, Kapil Dev played 34 Test matches from the time Doshi made his debut at Madras in 1979-1980 to the end of the Pakistani series. C. K. Subramaniam, Madras

In my report there was a small though significant omission in the text. I had intended to say that I rated Doshi's performance above that of Bedi's because Doshi captured wickets without the assistance of good close-in catching. This certainly does not mean that I rate Doshi above Bedi. Michael Dalvi, Calcutta

Tone down, Mr Shahabuddin

Syed Shahabuddin's analysis, Mrs Gandhi and the Muslim vote(20 March) was timely. The elections are almost round the corner and Mrs Gandhi—the shrew tactician that she is--has begun rivetting her eyes on the BJP, since she can no longer bank on what is being termed as 'the Muslim vote 'The importance being given to Atal Behari Vajpayee by the AIR is ample evidence of Mrs Gandhi's intentions Mrs Gandhi should know that the Mushms who have remained in India after partition have done so by choice. And the day they are made to feel that they have made the wrong choice, the very fabric of Indian secularism will be torn to pieces

Tanyir Salim, Aligath

The servility of the Indian Muslims is the cause of their present plight. Mrs Gandbi's factics to woo Muslim votes is nothing short of blackmail. What the Mushins need at this stage is a strong leader; but sorry, not someone like Mr Shahabuddii:

Syed Zulkarnam Ahmed, New Pelhi

Mr Shahabuddin's was a bold analysis of the Muslim vote. Mrs Gandhi has every right to practise her own faith. provided it doesn't interfere with the concept of secularism. However, the brand of extremism which the RSS and Arva Samay believe in, speaks of intolerance and sheer communalism Notwithstanding the fact that a lot of Hindus ear bect, no sane person can give more importance to a cow than a human being To insult and slaughter human beings for the sake of cows is, to put it mildly quite stupid Fareque Ahamed, Cuttack

To a great extent Mr Shahabuddin was correct in his analysis. Since 1947, the conduct of the Muslim voters has proved that preference is invariably given to a Muslim League candidate. provided he has a fair chance of winning. In the absence of such a candidate, the votes go to any Muslim who stands on any ticket, provided he has a fair chance of winning. This explains why the Muslims of two constituencies voted for Muslim candidates of the BIP in the recent Delhi elections. Had the BJP put up Hindu candidates, it would not have got any Muslim votes.

The third preference of Muslim votes was the Congress till 1977. Now the Muslims have started choosing candidates from other parties in a bid to make it clear to Mrs Gandhi that she should not take them for granted. It is abundantly clear that the Muslim votes as a Muslim, not as an Indian or a Congressman or a communist His loyalty is to his religion and his community, not to any party or the country.

Balraj Madhok, New Delhi

I wish to protest against the remark made by Mr Shahabuddin in the fifth paragraph of his article ("The Hindu masses have learnt to bend like grass

and lie low when horsemen trample it..."). Mr Shahabuddin has proved himself a fanatic. He has outdone Aurangzeb in his fanaticism. It is clear that he is trying to whip up communal passions. People like him should be sent to an asylum .

C. V. Rama Krishna Panicker, Kollakadavu (Kerala)

Mr Shahabuddin tried to tear Mrs Gandhi to shreds in an abortive attempt to woo the Muslim votes lumself. It was difficult to appreciate his views without reservations. To begin with, there is no organisation by the name of Vishal Hindu Parishad, there is, however, one which is called Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Secondly, Mr Shahabuddin blamed the RSS and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Sammelan for the Meerut and Moradabad riots when neither of them had anything to do with the disturbances. Evem Imam Bukhari has not held them responsible Further, Mr Shahabuddm asserted that the Hindus have learnt to bend like grass, while appreciating this remark, I wish to point out that if the Hindus had not believed in that philosophy which was passed on to them by Lord Buddha, neighbouring countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Burma would not have existed today

I agree with Mr Shahabuddin when he says that forcible steribsation is an insult to humanity. But it is also worth noting that the population of India is increasing rapidly (in fact, the birthrate among Muslims is much higher than that of Hindus). So why should the Hindus alone practise family planning? Are the Muslims dreaming of doing what their brethren did in Indonesia?

It was wrong of Mr Shahabuddin to say that in Moradabad the police opened fire on the Muslims while they were offering prayers. In reality, the police opened fire in selfdefence when they were attacked by the Muslims. He further claimed that the Mushms in India are economically weak; how then does Mr Shahabuddin explain the mushrooming of mosques and madarsas in the country? And if the BJP is following the ideology of Hegdewar, how does Mi Shahabuddin explain the presence of people like Mr Sikander Bakht and 45,000 Muslim workers of Bihar in the BJP?

Abimanyu, Moradabad

From Mr Shahabuddin's arguments it appears as though Muslims are the only sufferers in this country. Pray, what are his, or his community's grievances? I have prepared a rough list from his previous articles that have appeared in different news magazines in the recent past:

1. Since independence, Muslims have been treated as second class

Muslims are not given their due share in civil and defence services.

Muslims are being harassed by the police, government officials and politicians

4. In terms of education, the Muslims are as backward as they were 35 years ago. The government has not done anything about it.

5 Economically too, the Muslims are tottering. The government has done nothing.

6. The Waqf board is not allowed to function independently.

 7. The m government is not giving permission to set up more Muslim universities like the one in Aligarh.

8. Family planning is being forced

on Muslims.

In short, all the ills being suffered by the Muslims are caused by others. Let us take the issues one by one:

1 This feeling of being second class citizens is unfounded. It arises from the guilt of partition

Any record would prove this is a lie. No one can claim to have any particular right for any particular post, the selection depends on sheer merit

This complaint is the same as those of hargans, tubals, naxabtes, bootleggers, smugglers and dissatisfied politicians. There is nothing exceptional about Muslims as such.

4. Neither the government nor anyone can be held responsible for this. Barring exceptions in urban areas, no Muslim girl is allowed to attend school. The *mullahs*, or *moulvis* run their own madarsas in which only the Quran is taught. The elementary knowledge of writing and reading is not imparted. Very few of them send then children to school. This is the practice (If anyone forces them to attend school, it is immediately taken as an encroachment on their minority rights.)

5. Muslims are not the only economically backward people in India. There are hundreds and thousands who are worse off. The government alone cannot be blamed for this. The people are as much responsible for

this state of affairs

6 In the name of religious autonomy the work done by the Waqf board is in the records of the intelligence departments. (It is better not to discuss the matter.)

There is no dearth of universities in India And two communal universities (Aligarh Muslim University and the Benaras Hindu University) are more than enough m

8. It the Muslims do not heed the international warning against population explosion, then frankly, it is their own business.

K. N. Warrier, Madras

RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE

RIDING HIGH

On 19 April, Ramakrishna Hegde completed 100 days as the chief minister of the first ever non-Congress government in Karnataka. How has his government performed? How different is his government from the previous ones? KHADRI SHAMANNA, editor of Kannada Prabha and the doyen of Kannada journalism takes a close look at the first Janata government after the crash of '80.

et was hardly an auspicious beginning for the 56-year old, bearded Ramakrishna Hegde Politically, he was in an unenviable position. His own party, the Janata, did not have an absolute majority in the House The breakaway Kranti Ranga faction of Sorab Bangarappa introduced further uncertainty by disowning the merger of the Kranti Ranga with the Janata Party. The first bit of good news for Hegde came when most of the Kranti Ranga MLAs joined Hegde and accepted the cabinet posts offered to them. Among 23 ministers in his cabinet now, as many as ten belonged to the Kranti Ranga. Hegde initially tried to woo Bangarappa, but when he failed he did not shy off from the challenge. The first round of the Hegde Bangarappa fight went to Hegde on points when Bangarappa neither became deputy chief minister nor could he muster enough support to destabilise the government.

But just when the Janata government appeared to be settling down, came the Tarikere byelection. The election for this constituency had been countermanded following the death of the Congress(I) candidate a few days before the January Assembly elections. The Hegde-led Janata Party was on a sticky wicket. Its official candidate was a Bangarappa follower (he was later disowned by Bangarappa). And not, unexpectedly, therefore, the Congress(I) won this Assembly seat.

But undaunted by the Tarikere defeat, Hegde started consolidating his government and promoting a new brand of administration which was not only in sharp contrast to Gundu Rao's style of functioning but was also aimed at helping the weaker sections of society. He announced a series of relief measures for the poor, while ensuring that those who wanted to meet him to redress their grievances were welcome to do so. 16

This posed a problem for his two arch enemies—the Congress(I) and S Bangarappa—as they could hardly find any issue on which to criticise him And what they also did not realise was that they could no longer take the support of their own MLAs for granted, and to find this out they did not have to wait for long

In the elections to two vacant legislative council seats (the vacancy was caused by the election of two ruling party council members to the Assembly), Hegde succeeded in humiliating both Bangarappa and the Congress(I) led by Veerappa Moily, who was number two in Gundu Rao's cabinet. Bangarappa and Moily together set up two rich Congress(I) activists as independent candidates to fight the ruling party

nominees for the council scats. The result was a disaster for them. Not merely did they lose but their candidates got less votes than the official strength of their alliance.

At least a dozen Congress(I) and three Ranga MLAs defying the party whip had either voted for the Janata Party candidates, or deliberately invalidated their votes.

Hegde, apparently, was preparing himself for the battle for quite some time. The first thing he did after becoming chief minister was to show that he would be a chief minister who could command the national spotlight. He convened a meeting of the southern chief ministers at Bangalore only 11 days before the council elections were due. The extraordinary success of the meeting added to



Hegde's stature both at the national and state levels. To many in Karnata-ka who had so long been suffering Delhi's whims and nominees silently, he appeared to be the man destined to restore to them their self-respect. And Hegde also presumably gained quite a few admirers among the people sitting in the opposition benches, as is evident from the results of the council elections.

He was at his best during the budget session. The opposition led by the Moily-Bangarappa duo, could hardly match the wit, sarcasm and erudition displayed by the Janata CM. In fact on many occasions Hegde made this duo look like boyscouts groping in the dark. In spite of its impressive 81 members in the House, the Congress(I) never looked like posing any serious problem for Hegde. The opposition leaders had not done their homework well often they would criticise the Janata government for pursuing with the measures initiated by the previous Congress(I) government and make fools of themselves. Moily, who described the think tank of eminent econom ists, social scientists and administrators appointed by Hegde to advise him on important policy matters as the "stink tank" had to eat his own words when Mrs Gandhi appointed a similar body of counsellors a fortnight later. He was again caught on the wrong foot when Mrs Gandhi announced the appointment of the Sarkaria commission. Till then Moily was telling the Assembly that the southern council formed after the meeting of the southern chief ministers had sinister implications.

And yet, Hegde, who is also the finance minister, should have been in some trouble. Saddled with the

Hegde presenting the state budget



Kanakpura: A crucial test

Kanakpura is not a place of gold as the name literally implies. Although situated on the fringes of the sprawling Bangalore city, it is actually one of the most backward areas in the state. Barring a state highway which runs through the district there is no tarred road in the area. Drinking water is scarce Power supply is virtually nonexistent. The forests which had once been the pride of the place have been denuded by greedy contractors. And though it is one of the three major silk-producing centres of the state (it accounts for about ten per cent of the production of the famous Bangalore silk), there is only one mill in the entire area for spinning vain from raw silk. This is the place from where the chief minister of Karnataka, Ramakrish na Hegde is staking his future

Nobody doubts that the byelection in Kanakpura -due on 15 May is going to be the most crucial test for the Janata government. Not merely because Ramakrishna Hegde will be fighting for his scat in the Assembly to continue as the chief minister of the state but also because the political future of the state depends on the outcome of the election. The election, for all practical purposes, will be a sort of referendum on the Janata Party's performance so tar If Hegde wins. and there is no reason why he should not, then the Janata Party would gain a stature from where it could convert its slender majority to a stable majority

On the other hand, if Hegde loses, it will, in all probability, be the end of the Janata government. Those who know Hegde closely say that if he loses he would rather prefer his party to sit in the opposition. He is the kind of person who is likely to take his defeat as a vote of noconfidence. Aware of these possibilities the Congress(I) in the state for once is busy trying to set its house in order. Ever since the Janu ary debacle, the Congress(1) has been a dispirited lot with bitter internecine quarrels dividing it into many splinter groups. The victory of the Congress(1) candidate at the Tarikere byelection in February restored some confidence in the party's ranks, which, however, wore off during the March Legislative Council elections.

Although the Congress (1) is yet to name its candidate for the Kanakpura constituency, presumably because of internal squabbles, the indications are that its nominee would be from the vokkaligas. Why

must the Congress(I) candidate be from among the vokkaliga? A look at the composition of the electorate in the constituency provides the answer Of about 86,000 voters, be tween 35,000 to 37,000 are vokkaligas. This is significant in a state where the caste factor has always played an important part in politics. For instance, all the chief ministers of the state before Mr DevaragUrs were from either of the two majority communities-the lingavats or the vokkaligas Devaraj Urs belonged to a backward community The two chief ministers who succeeded him, both Gundu Rao and Ramakrishna Hegde, are brahmins

By setting up a vokkaliga candidate, the Congress(I), therefore, hopes to cash in on the communal tensions. At the same time it is trying to coerce its newly-found ally, Bangarappa, to set up his candidate to cut into the votes of the backward and — harran communities who account for a substantial segment of the electorate and whose votes, judging by the results of the January elections, would otherwise go for Hegde

During the January elections. The Congress(1) candidate, C. Appaji, seeking re-election for a second termigot 27,500 votes against winning Janata candidate Scindhia's 37,300 votes. According to some Congress(1) strategists their candidate would get more votes in the byelection for two other reasons, the people are not as disgusted with the Congress(1) as they were during the general elections, and, C. Appaji, its nominee then, had been neglecting his constituency and had alienated his voters.

But all this looks more like wishful thinking. For, if the electorate behaved the way the Congress(I) thinks, the Janata candidate P.G.R. Semdhia would have lost. Although Scindhia hails from Kanak.pura he belongs to a miniscule minority community-the Marathas. The Congress(I) opponent, on the other hand was a vokkaliga. There is no evidence to suggest that the voters will behave differently in the coming byelection. On the contrary, in the last tew months Ramakrishna Hegde has gone up in stature. Even his critics agree that he has been efficient without being spectacular. It is, therefore, hardly likely that the voters of Kanakpura would to like to turn the clock back.

Tooshar Pandit

burden of a large overdraft left by the previous government he had little elbow room to find the resources to fulfil the pledges his party made to the people during the elections. While for obvious reasons he could not levy additional taxes so soon after assuming office, every section of the population was demanding concessions. By compulsion therefore, he had to opt for some fiscal tightrope walking and presented a budget proposing only a small dose of taxation but showing a large deficit. An instance of his predicament he had promised to abolish the profession tax. He was, however, not ready to do this in his first budget. But later yielding to the pressures of his partymen he abolished the tax on those drawing less than Rs 1,200 a month.

If Hegde was severe on the opposition during the budget session, demolishing their arguments by hardhitting and well-researched speeches, he was lenient towards the political parties supporting his government. Not that these parties always agreed with him. Indeed, the irrepressible BJP leader A.K. Subbaiah often came down heavily on the government in the legislature. Hegde indulged these criticism, and on occasions promised to make amends. He knew that with his slender majority he could not afford to antagonise any of the parties sup-

porting him. Tegde, of course, is neither a miracleman nor does he believe in working miracles. But he appears to be moving in the right directions. What is more important, the government appears to be earnest about redeeming its pledges. This is what makes the new government different. Anybody coming to Karnataka will find a distinct change in its atmosphere. The people are breathing a little more freely. Gone are the days of helicopter hops and shrieking sirens with policemen blocking traffic whenever a minister or the chief minister was travelling. The helicopter which the previous chief minister Gundu Rao used so freely has been grounded. The imported cars have been locked inside the garages. Even the red lights which normally crown the cars of the ministers and the VIPs in most states do not have any place in Karnataka now. Hegde has declined to take government accommodation. So have many of his ministers. Austerity is the keyword for Ramakrishna Hegde's government. And it stands out in marked contrast to the flamboyant, extravagant, and capricious ways of the previous government. Nobody can miss noticing this.

During his first hundred days in power the last Congress(I) chief minister Gundu Rao had accepted about 50 public felicitations (mostly stagemanaged by the government or the Congress-I members themselves) and among the souvenirs collected

by him in course of such adulatory exercises were silver swords and silver masons (of the kind one sees Lord Hanuman holding in pictures). Neither Hegde nor any of his ministers have been felicitated even once during their first 100 days in office. In a Congress(I) culture this would surely have been construed as something of a disqualification—evidence of a lack of popular enthusiasm for the new government. But Hegde on the very first day in his office made it clear to his colleagues that they should not try to cheat themselves by organising fake felicitations nor accept any invitation for felicita-

In fact, if one follows the course which Hedge has been taking during his first hundred days in office it will immediately be evident that he has been concentrating on doing precisely the opposite of what the previous government had done. He has thrown open the gates of Vidhan Soudha, the massive granite building which houses the state secretariat to the people. Soon after the new government was sworn in, streams of people started swarming into the secretariat which for most of Gundu Rao's three-year rule was out of bounds for them. Once Gundu Rao even posted BSF personnel around the place to keep the people away:

And after Hegde threw the gates open he met the people freely, listened to their grievances, gave them what assurances he could. Almost religiously he meets people for about an hour every morning and evening, to receive representations from them. Obviously, he wants the distance that separated the people from the previous government reduced. Indeed, he has institutionalised this practice by creating a separate department for public grievances and placing it under the charge of the law minister Lakshmişagar.

Hegde firmly believes that power flows from the will of the people. And so his entire strategy has been to meet the people. One of the first things he did after becoming the chief minister was to invite the representatives of the farmers for a discussion. The farmers of Karnataka had been agitating for a long time demanding various concessions. He spent one whole day discussing their problems with them. The farmers aired their views freely and frankly. So did Hegde. And at the end of the day, he announced that all the pending cases against the farmers would be withdrawn. The farmers left the meeting hall thinking they had won. It was of course Hegde who had won the day.

One basic difference that I see between Gundu Rao and Ramakrishna Hegde is that the former approached the issues in a cavaller fashion while the latter approaches them in a very cool and calculated manner. When the farmers wanted the government to write off all the loans advanced to them, Gundu Rao instantly promised reliefs worth Rs 85 crores. But he never kept the promise. Hegde oftered a more modest Rs 36 crore in reliefs but saw to it that the government took appropriate steps to make the relief available.

Other important achievements of the government so far are

 Tackling a serious drought situation, which it had to face immediately after assuming power, rather effectively.

 Supplying foodgrains through the public distribution system at subsidised prices

dised prices.

 Implementation of Kannada as the language for official communication within the state at all levels.

• Introduction of the Antodaya scheme in the state to give relief to the rural poor.

What the stars foretell: Hegde with the Kannada matinee idol Rajkumar



But perhaps the two most important steps of far reaching consequences taken by the government are the introduction of the Lokayukta and the anti-defection bills in the Assembly. The Lokayukta bill is aimed at curbing corruption at high places. Even the chief minister will have to stand to the scrutiny of the Lokayukta, the Indian equivalent of the Ombudsman. The anti-defection bill seeks to put an end to floor crossing.

To shake the bureaucracy out if its

inertia caused primarily by perpetual political interference into the administrative matters during Gundu Rao's regime, Hegde at the first available opportunity struck at the officials, particularly the police, which had become the handmaid of the Congress(I) ministry.

When Hegde took over as chief minister many doubted if he would survive the odds stacked against him. That he has survived for 100 days is itself an evidence of his politial skill and no mean measure of

his administrative competence. He certainly looks like the man of the moment. But it is still too early to pass a final judgment either on Ramakrishna Hegde or his government. The verdict will be given on 15 May, by the people, the day Mr Hegde will face perhaps his greatest political test: the Kanakpura byelection which he is contesting and which will either send him to the Assembly and enable him to retain his chief ministership or defeat him and destroy his government.

'Hegde will be defeated'

Kranti Ranga leader S. BANGARAPPA tells Sunday

Q: What do you think of the Janata government's performance so tar?

A: Very disappointing, seeing the way the present government is moving. I should say it is not on the right track. Not only has it failed to make good any of its election promises but it has also failed to keep even the law and order situation under control. Already the state has witnessed two major riots—one at Bellary and the other at Bijapui. The police force is demoralised and the administration has come to a standstill.

Q: Is the present government any different from the previous one?

A: I don't find any difference excepting that Gundu Rao was garrulous and vain while Ramakrishna Hegde is a quiet operator.

Q: Why didn't you join the Janata

government?

A: I was never in the Janata Party.

Q: But didn't you, along with your party MLAs, agree to merge the Kranti Ranga with the Janata Party, at a meeting held at the residence of Mrs Chandraprabha Urs?

A: No. Some discussions did take place but the matter was left to the executive body for a final decision.

Q: Then how is it that so many of your party MLAs including your party president, Abdul Nazir Sab, joined the Janata Party claiming that the Kranti Ranga had merged with it?

A: They were lured away by various temptations. That can hardly

establish merger as a fact.

Q: Would you have agreed to the merger if you were made either the chief minister or the deputy chief minister?

A: I have never aspired for power or office.

Q: But the general impression is that you started to create problems for the present government because you were not made the chief minister.

A: That's all wrong And even if I had aspired for the office what is wrong in it? I have been an MLA for 15 years. I campaigned for the Janata-Ranga candidates all over the state and worked for their success ignoring my constitutuency. Where was Hegde then? Where were the leaders of the Janata Party? Now, doesn't that entitle me to be considered for the office?

Q: What is your present attitude

towards this government?

A: We support this government In fact, on 2 March, the executive body of our party adopted a resolution saying that we must support this government. Not because the persons who are running the government are good people or because the government is good but to redeem our pledges to the people.

Q: You say you support this government. But in the Legislative Council elections you joined the Congress(1) to vote for the Congress(1)-sponsored independent candidates set up against the Janata-Party candidates. Has it not harmed your credibility?

A: With the people, no. Only a handful of people who read newspapers appear to be excited over it.

Q: What will the results of the Kanakpura byelection likely to be? A: The Janata candidate will be

defeated.

Q: How? In the last election the Janata candidate won by a margin

of about 10,000 votes

A: But then the Janata government was not in power. By now the people are wiser. The people are particularly angry at the way I was cheated. If the Janata Party thinks that it has won the elections on their own strength they are sadly mistaken. Without Bangarappa they could not have gone very far. And I will prove this in Kanakpura.

Q: Are you putting up your candidate against Hegde at Kanakpura? A: We may if we think that is going to defeat the Januta Party candidate.

Q. And why must the Janata Party candidate be deteated?

A: Because I resent the manner in which Ramakrishna Hegde was forsted on us. Was it necessary to bring in a non-legislator to head the government? How then can these Janata leaders be different from Mrs Gandhi? They are even worse. At least in Karnataka she picked up an MLA to head the government. Could not the Janata leaders do the same thing? And they now have the cheek to comment on Mrs Gandhi's style of functioning.

Q: But Hegde stepped in only at the moment after you discarded several names suggested for the office of the chief minister

A That's wrong. They had made up their mind about bringing in Hegde because this was the only way the Janata Party could come to

Q: You appear to be very bitter about Hegde. But isn't it a fact that you could not pull on well with any of the leaders with whom you were associated. You fell out with Devaraj Urs, then Gundu Rao and now Hegde. Is it because you love to play the role of an eternal dissident or is it because of your ambitions getting the better of you?

A: When I left Devaraj Uts I knew the people were not with him any more and I was proved right. As for Gundu Rao, he is now a hasbeen. I also feel Hegde does not enjoy the confidence of the people. And I always like to be with the people. Chief ministers come and go. I have seen enough of chief ministers. Nor am I after power. And that is why I am still in politics while others have perished under more favourable conditions.

Q: Do you have any regrets?
A: Yes, just one. I regret the day I
decided to support the Janata

'I should be in office only with the support of the people'

Karnataka CM RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE tells TOOSHAR PANDIT

The place, located in the heart of the garden city of Bangalore and within a stone's throw from the official residence of former chief minister Gundu Rao, is called the home office. This is where the CM sits when he is not in his other office at the secretariat. It is a two-storied stucco building with teak panelled windows, gleaming fixtures and rich upholstery. Gundu Rao had built it at a cost of Rs 25 lakhs to suit his extravagant tastes. Although the new chief minister, Ramakrishna Hegde, lives far from this place, it continues to be the CM's second office carrying the old tag--the home office-which hardly fits it now. It was here, while having a late lunch of rice, boiled vegetables, curd and sweets at around 2.30 pm, brought from home by his youngest daughter, that Ramakrishna Hegde talked to Sunday for more than an hour. Excerpts:

: You were, it is said, very reluctant to become the chief minister. What led you to change your mind? A: When the elections were over, I thought my work in Karnataka was also over. That was on the fifth (January). I was very happy to hear the results and I expected that the opposition would win. I got this kind of feeling during the last few days before the polls. Actually, I was in Mangalore on 6 January when the election results were being declared. I came back to Bangalore on 7, January. Then we started discussing as to how we should proceed and all that.

Q: Which names were considered for the office of the chief minister?

A: We thought of Abdul Nazır Sab because Bangarappa did not have any support. He had the support of only 10 members. Even his followers in the old Kranti Ranga were not with him. But he claimed that he had a lot of support. So Biju Patnaik asked him how he would like the leader to be chosen: should it be through consensus or by secret ballot. Bangarappa did not want either. He wanted to be made the leader. But that was not possible if we were to stick to democratic norms. So we suggested Nazir Sab's name. Bangarappa did not agree. As a compromise, we suggested B. Rachaiah's name: he did not agree. We suggested A. Lakshmisagar's name, and again that was not acceptable to him.

Lakshmisagar is also from the backward community, whose cause Bangarappa claims to champion. Rachaiah is a harijan. The names of two other Janata party MLAs, H.D. Deve Gowda and S.R. Bommar, were also considered.

O But how did you enter into the picture?

A: Well, on 9 January when the MLAs had gathered to elect their leader Mr Nijalingappa asked me if I would like to contest. I told him-'You have known me for more than 30 years and by now you should also know that I do not want to get into power. Besides, I do not want to come back to state politics.' Then he said: 'Let me put it like this. If the party wants will you decline? Then I said, 'No. It the party wants that, I will not run away from the responsibility.' So that is how it happened.

Q: Are you happy in your new role?

A. Well, not really. Having been m national politics for more than six years, I did not want to come back to state politics for two reasons. One is,



If I hesitate to face the electorate it is not worth continuing as the chief minister. It is my conviction that I should be in the office only with the support of the people.

I would again be within very narrow confines. And second, once a leader leaves the state, another leader fills that vacuum. I did not want this process to be reversed, by coming from national politics to the state

Q: To what extentidid the fear of the Janata Party repeating its past folly and disintegrating owing to internecine quariels influence your

decision?

A: Once we won the election, the whole country's attention was focussed here and suddenly it gave rise to tremendous expectations. People started saying that they hoped that the Janata Party would not commit the same mistakes that they had made in the past. Once they (the Janata Party) got an opportunity and threw it away. This created a sense of added responsibility among us. So, I thought that by coming back to state politics I would serve the cause of national politics also.

Q: Since then you seem to be having a tough time, weathering one storm after another. What according to you are the major hurdles you had to cross during your first 100 days in

A: Everybody knows that we have a very slender majority, even taking into consideration the support of the independents and three friendly parties—the BJP, the CPI and the CPI(M). It is a very delicate situation. We have to do a lot of tightrope walking. We have to watch every step particularly because the parties which are supporting us are opposed to each other. That is why, by necessity, we have to adopt a course where we can take everybody with us. Secondly, Bangarappa has created problems. This was not totally unexpected, especially since we know the man. He has a psychological problem also: he cannot accept the number two position. We had made a commitment to the people that we would stay united; we also promised that after the elections there would not be two parties-the Janata and the Kranti Ranga. So, I was hoping Bangarappa would reconcile and become a part of us.

Q: Did you make any moves to pacify him? If so, what were they?

·How did he react to them?

A: Well, immediately after the election of the leader I drove to Bangarappa's residence. Even earlier I had promised him the deputy chief minister's post. So, I wanted to

meet him immediately after I was elected the leader. But my colleagues and I were prevented from meeting him. There was some unpleasant incident there. That evening Bangarappa rang me up and said that he was sorry for what had happened and that he was not aware of what was happening outside-on the compounds of his own residence. Then I repeated the offer. I said, let us forget about it (the incident) and requested him to join the cabinet as the deputy chief minister. He declined. I pleaded with him to reconsider his decision, but he was adamant.

Q: Is it because of this that you later withdrew your offer of the

deputy CM's post to him?

A: Well, not really. The same evening Bangarappa made a statement saying that the Kranti Ranga's merger with the Janata Party was not final, and that the Kranti Ranga would continue to have a separate identity. So on the next day, 10 January, we had talks again. He came to my house. By then he was willing to join my cabinet as the deputy CM. But my colleagues said that because he had made a statement which had created a lot of damage to our image, we could not have him as the deputy chief minister. Then I told him, 'Look here,friend, because of your statement there is a change in the situation. You can, of course, join the cabinet as the number two.' The offer was there for him for quite some time. After that, again, there were people who wanted that we should meet. Bangarappa came and met me and we had a long talk. Again he expressed his desire to join the cabinet but only as the deputy chief minister. Then I told him that I would consider the matter. And after two days I wrote a letter inviting him to join the cabinet as deputy chief minister. But I also insisted that before doing so he had to say that the merger of the Kranti Ranga with the Janata Party was final and irrevocable. I got his reply a couple of days later in which he said that he was not prepared to do that. He even went a step backward and said that the Janata government should be called the Janata Front government. And that was

Q: This surely caused you consider able worries. How did you ward off the twin threats posed by Bangarappa and the opposition Con-

gress(I)?

A: From the beginning my understanding has been that since we are here with the people's support we will be here as long as the people want us. This government's survival does not depend on any individual or a group of individuals. As long as we sincerely try to fulfil our electoral promises, people will not let us down. Even if the people have an impression that we are making ear-

If the people are satisfied with the performance of this government we will continue; if they are dissatisfied this government does not have a right to continue.

nest attempts to fulfil our promises to them, they will wait for the results. That is why the first few steps our government took were aimed at minimising the distance between the government and the people. We thought our approach should be such that it should create a sense of belonging in every citizen's mind and every citizen should feel that this government is his or her government.

Q: To what extent have you achieved this objective? Has the

strategy worked?

A: Well, you know what happened at the council elections. The Congress(I) and Bangarappa's group joined hands. And Bangarappa, the great champion of the backward classes, did not have any compunction in voting for two rich candidates who belong to the Congress(I) though they sloc : as independents. Both these can indates belonged to two major communities. Our candidates were Nazır Sab and P.G.R. Scindhia. The first belonged to a minority community and the second to a backward community. This (legislative council) election in which our candidates won clearly proved that both communal and money influence have been totally defeated. What is more, our candidates polled more votes than they really commanded. That means, even some members of the opposition Congress(I) and some of Bangarappa's followers think that we can be trusted. Does this not indicate that we have been able to create a sense of trust among the people?

Q: How much money do you think the Congress(I) spent for the council

elections?

A: I would prefer not to comment on this. But as everybodyknows a number of Congress(I) bigwigs came here from Delhi to canvass for the so-called independent candidates. Among them were former chief minister Veerendra Patil, Mrs Shalinitai Patil, the wife of the Maharashtra CM and Mrs Gandhi's current trouble-shooter, Rajesh Pilot, and even Jagdish Tytler.

Q: But the Congress(I) leaders claim that this was purely coincidental. For example, they say that Veerendra Patil was here to attend a marriage ceremony; Shalinitai to discuss about the Shivaji festival with

you.

A: Don't you think it is too much of a coincidence? And to set the record

straight, one of the so-called independent candidates is an acknowledged protege of Veerendra Patil and another candidate was the father of a Congress(I) MP.

Q: What tangible steps have you taken so far to increase your support

among the people?

A: Well, for the first time in Karnataka, we have got the support of the rural people. We had, of course, some rural support earlier also but only in isolated pockets. And the farmers have been restless for the last three years. They have many genuine grievances. So, one of the first step we took was to have a direct dialogue with them to understand their problems and look for remedies. We are also having dialogues with the representatives of workers, students and teachers. They represent four vital segments of society. We have already withdrawn all the cases filed against the farmers, workers, students and teachers. I presented the budget in which I have tried to redeem the pledges we had made to the weaker sections of society. We have also taken some positive steps in that regard. In rural areas all those who do not have jobs and if they want work, they could join the land army and earn their living. We have already taken many such steps.

Q: How different is your government from the previous one?

A: I often say, albeit in a lighter vein, that the previous government was always flying in the air. Now, we are solidly on the ground. We talk to the people. The ministers were far removed from the people in those days. The secretariat was closed to the public. We have removed all these restrictions and the pomp and show-the escort cars, the use of helicopters and the imported cars etc. They, those satkar samaramb (lavish receptions) have been stopped. We have not attended a single felicitation function since the new government was sworn in. This also, perhaps, has created an impact on the people. They (the people) now think that the people who govern them are just like them. Just because a minister occupies a minister's chair, he need not become someone different.

Q: But are you satisfied with your

performance?

A: No, I am not very satisfied. In terms of policy statements, in terms of our conduct—yes. But in terms of implementation—no. It will, perhaps, take some more time and that is why we will have to concentrate on implementing what we have promised. And the actions should be result-oriented. We have already made a beginning. The Lokayukt Bill, the Anti-Defection Bill, the Zilla Parishad Bill are all aimed in that direction.

Q: What went wrong with the Tarikere byelection?

21

A. In the January election too Tarikere was not considered a favourable seat for our candidate. The constituency was allotted to a nomince of Bangarappa. In the byelection too, Bangarappa wanted the same candidate to run for that seat. So, we adopted him as the Janata Party candidate. As you know the election for that constituency was countermanded following the death of the Congress(1) candidate Actually, I wanted to contest from that constituency in the byelection But the candidate we had selected was from a backward class and as he was very keen to contest, I did not want to deprive him of his chance to get elected. Many of my colleagues suggested to me that our nominee was not going to win and we should change the candidate. Had w changed the candidate we would have certainly won that seat. But I refused to change him. And during the election this candidate went or saving that he was a Kranti Range man and a follower of Bangarappa He used Bangarappa's posters and he did not cooperate with our cam paign managers. He did not accom pany any of our leaders in public meetings, etc. And the people natur ally thought be was against the Janata Party. That placed him at a disadvantage

Q. Does the victory of the Congress(I) candidate in that byelection in anyway indicate, that the Congress(I) is regaining some of its lost

ground?

A No, certainly not There was, of course, considerable sympathy for the Congress(I) candidate because he was the younger brother of the candidate who was to tight the election for the Congress(I) in January but died before the election could be held. But our candidate lost because he identified himself with Bangarappa.

Q Some of the parties supporting you have been criticising your government whenever they got an opportunity to do so The BJP and the CPI appear to be particularly critical. Does this pose any threat to the stability of your government?

A I do not think there is any threat to the stability of our government Indeed, I welcome criticism. I am aware that their support is critical in every sense of the term. I can understand that on some matters triends like Subbaiah (the leader of the BJP legislature party) feel very strongly and it is possible that on certain matters there were differences between them and us but they have been giving us unflinching support. I have absolutely no complaints.

Q: But they might be supporting you not out of any love for you or your policies but because they do not want to swim against the tide.

A: I do not want to comment on their strategy. What I am concerned about is the fact that they supported 22 From the beginning my understanding has been that since we are here with the people's support we will, be here as long as the people want us. This government's survival does not depend on any individual or a group of individuals.

us unconditionally and I hope that they will continue to do so. It is in the interest of the whole state, it is in the interest of the political parties who believe in democracy, that this government should survive. We should complete our full term. And we will.

Q. What motivated you to convene the meeting of the southern chief ministers? Was it an image-building

exercise?

A. There was no other motivation except to have a consultation among southern chief ministers on certain specific issues and to have a meeting to understand each other. You know, L had not met NTR before. I had talked to MGR in my capacity as the general secretary of the Janata Party a few times but I never had any close acquaintance with him. I thought it would be a good opportunity for exchanging views, and therefore, I made a suggestion to NTR. The primary objective was to discuss about our financial memorandum to the finance commission. And I thought that instead of each state preparing its own memorandum according to its own thinking it would be more useful it all of us pooled our thinking taculties together and prepared a more effective case. That is all.

Q. How did you arrange to bring NTR and MGR to the meeting?

A: I went to Hyderabad to meet NTR on 14-15 February. You know we are short of power and Andhra Pradesh has a marginal surplus. Earher, I had released some water to Tamil Nadu to save its crops which were dying due to drought. Even before that I had met Babasaheb Bhosale and I had very cordial talks with him So when I met NTR and discussed about power and other things, I made the suggestion. It just occurred to me. It was, of course, in my mind for quite some time. Earher, when I met Mr Bhosale he wanted me to spare the services of our geologists. I said, why not? His state was also facing an acute scarcity of drinking water.

Since then, I had the feeling that this is something we should do by ourselves. If one state does not come to the help of the other, then what is the point of being neighbours. So this was there in my mind and I

wanted to have a meeting of the chief munisters of the neighbouring states, particularly on the eve of the finance commission's visit to these states. So I broached the idea with NTR and he immediately responded. Then I wrote to other southern chief ministers, including Karunakaran immediately after my return to Bagalore, I think, on 17 February or so. All the others accepted the invitation excepting Karunakaran. He did not reply. So I talked to him over telephone. He said that he may not be able to come because the Assem-bly was in session. I said, look Karunakaran, all Assemblies are in session in these states and that is why I fixed the meeting on a Sunday. Then he said, he would try to come Eventually, however, he did not turn up.

Q Only recently you have been to Delhi to attend the chief ministers' conference. Did you find out how many chief ministers are eager or willing to follow up your idea?

A. I have not been able to talk to every chief minister but the CMs I spoke to, said it was a good idea. I do not know it all of them will have the courage to say so publicly.

Q Doesn't the concept of a southern CMs' council smack of regionalism? How could you, as a leader of a national party, take the lead

in promoting it?

A: There is absolutely nothing regional about it. It is regional only in the geographical sense but not in spirit For instance, why should MGR use the good offices of the central government to get three cusecs of water from Kainataka? Or, why should I use the services of the union nunister of power to get some power from NTR2 It is not necessary. As it is, the central government has to carry tremendous responsibilites in taking care of the security of the country, foreign relations, running the railways, attending to law and order problems. Why should we burden it with more responsibilitiesthings we can sort out among ourselves? That is the logic behind my convening the meeting of the southern chief ministers

Q: But many tend to see in this, seeds of a possible centre-state confrontation. To what extent are these

fears justified?

A: The fears are absolutely unfounded The very day that I was sworn-in I made a public statement saying that I believe in cooperative federalism and there is no question of my itching for a confrontation with the centre. It does not serve any purpose. And why should we, unless we are forced to?

Q: What do you think of the Sarkaria commission? Will any good

come of it?

A: The appointment of the commission itself is a vindication of our idea. But I want the commission to be enlarged to include five or six members and be given comprehensive terms of reference to cover all aspects of centre-state relations. Unless this is done, the commission is not likely to serve any useful purpose.

Q: Coming back to Karnataka, how would you assess the Congress(I)'s performance as the main opposition party in the state during the last 100 days?

A: I do not know whether I should comment on this. Well, if the performance during the entire budget session is any indication, I can say that instead of dealing with important issues they got bogged down with trivials. This I did not expect. I have been saying, from the very beginning, that I would like to have cooperation of not only the friendly opposition parties but also of the Congress(I) which should be reconciled to its new role as the opposition.

Q: The outcome of the Kanakpura byelection would certainly have a tremendous bearing on the political future of the state. For instance, if you win, the Janata Party is certain to gain more ground and if you lose, the Janata Party is likely to disintegrate. Don't you think that the stakes are very high at the Kanakpura byelection?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Couldn't you have chosen a safer constituency? The caste composition of the electorate in that constituency where vokkaligas are the dominant community could create problems for you. Don't you think so?

A: Personally, I do not take into consideration any caste factors. I accepted the offer of Mr Scindhia who was representing that constituency till recently for the reason that it is close to Bangalore (the seat was vacated by Mr Scindhia and later he was elected to the Legislative Council). So many of my colleagues offered to vacate their seats to let me contest: from Bijapur, Belgaum, Dharwar, from my own constituency Haliyal, from Mysore, and of course, from Bangalore. I did not choose any of them. I did not choose any constituency from Bangalore because, firstly, all the constituencies in Bangalore are considered very safe for the Janata Party. And, for that matter, all urban constituencies. The Congress(I) did not win a single urban constituency in the last elections. Even in the previous elections they did not get many urban seats. Secondly, three other constituencies which were offered to me-Basavanagudi, Jayanagar and Malleswaram—are known to be predominantly brahmin constituencies. Being a brahmin myself, I did not like to contest from any one of them. Then, the information minister, M. Raghupathi, offered his constituency. Shivajinagar. That again, was a safe constituency for me. But again I declined to contest for that seat

because I did not want the people to say, 'Hegde chose a safe seat and won.' Finally between Satnur and Kanakpura, I preferred the latter.

Q: But in the process aren't you

taking an undue risk?

A: Sooner or later we will have to get over this kind of caste consideration; the sooner the better. And I do not take this election as a test of my personal popularity. I consider it a test of the government's performance in the eyes of the people, particularly the rural people. Kanakpura is a 100 per cent rural constituency So, if people are satisfied with the performance of this government we will continue; if they are dissatisfied, this government does not have a right to continue. If I lose it will mean that we have not been able to live up to the expectations of the people. It is as simple as that

Q: What you seem to be saying is that you do not want to hang on to

power at any cost.

A. Actually, many people suggested to me that I should get into the Council. That would have been the safest course for me Many friends told me that I should not take any risk. They also cited several instances of chief ministers being the members of the Legislative Council-from Rajaji onwards. Mrs Gandhi was also a member of the Rajya Sabha for a period of her Prime Ministership. There is nothing wrong, legally or constitutionally, for a Legislative Council member to hold the office of chief minister. But I said, 'No.' It I hesitate to face the electorate it is not worth continuing as the chief minister. It is my conviction that I must be in the office only with the support of the people

Q: What is it like being a chief

A: Well, I do not know. It has not made any difference to me except that I have to work something like 18 hours a day. During the last three to four years I have had a comparatively easy life. But power is nothing new to me. I have been a minister for quite a long time. But it is a challenge and I would like to convert it into an opportunity.

Q: Opportunity for what?

A: For serving the people of the

The very day that I was sworn in I made a public statement saying that I believe in cooperative federalism, and there is no question of my itching for a confrontation with the centre. It does not serve any purpose.

state and in the larger context for the consolidation of the Janata Party, as a national alternative.

Q: What is your typical day like? A: I wake up at 6.30 am and I have my morning coffee between 6.30 and 6.45 am. Then I read the papers. At the same time my wife or I attend to the telephone calls. Some people are shocked because I personally answer the telephone calls. They just cannot believe that a chief minister attends to the telephone personally. After that I have my bath and then I have my breakfast in my bedroom because it is impossible to have it anywhere else with some 150 to 200 people stomping all over the place everyday. Then I meet these people for about half an hour or so. I can't really sit down and talk to them. Nevertheless, I meet them. Between 8.30 and 9 am I leave for my office at the secretariat and then it goes on and on and on mostly meeting the people, attending to the files, talking to the officers—the usual kind of thing that any chief minister does. Since last month I started coming to this second office (the office is close to Gundu Rao's residence and was built by the former chief minister at a cost of Rs. 25 lakhs.) I work in the afternoons. Here my youngest daughter, Samta, brings my lunch. I continue working till about 11 and sometimes till 11.30 at night. Then I go back to my residence. (He is the first chief minister who has not taken governmentaccommodation.) hardly talk to my children, my wife and they are always complaining. Other personal details: I am married with two daughers and a son. My son, Bharat, is the eldest. He has married a Marwarı gu l---a love match. He haş an industrial shed in Peenya which he secured about two-and-a-half vears ago. My first daughter, Mamta, married a Sindhi boy. Again, a love marriage. She runs a boutique, so does my daughter-in-law. So every member of my family is selfemployed. My youngest daughter has just done her MA in sociology and is planning to do a course in business management.

Q. Was your marriage, too, a love

marriage?

A: Well, yes and no. Or perhaps, both. I had gone and stayed in their house and liked the girl. Later I married her. Her father had also asked me if I would like to marry her. I said, yes That settled the matter.

Q'Areany of your children keen on joining politics?

A. I don't think so. They seem to think that one is enough in a family.

Q: Do you agree?

A. Well, I do not believe in dynastic politics. Of course, they are free to choose their own course. They are all interested in politics but they do not show undue interest in it or take advantage of my office. That is how it should be.

"Farooq Abdullah does not want a confrontation with the centre"

Syed Mir Qasim told UDAYAN SHARMA

With the elections to Jammu and Kashmir Assembly drawing close, chief minister Dr Faroog Abdullah has refused to have any "electoral understanding with the Congress (1). According to sources close to both Dr Abdullah and his friend, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the chief minister's aim is very clear:he does not want to be identified as an agent of the government of India. This move will not only help check the pro-Pakistan elements in the valley, like the Peoples Conference and the Jamaat-i-Islami, who are only waiting for an opportunity to raise chauvinistic slogans and join hands to "thwart off foreigners" but also to appease a section of hardliners in the National Conference itself which is opposed to having any truck with the centre. For instance, some NC leaders whom Dr Abdullah has dropped from his cabınet, like Gulam Nabi Kochar, are only waiting to discredit the CM. This largely explain why Dr Abdullah, who canvassed for the Congress(I) during the Delhi polls in an attempt to woo the Muslim vote, has refused to join hands with the Congress(I).

Therefore, during the election campaign, Dr Abdullah is expected to take a middle course:on the one hand he is likely to criticise the centre, to prove to the people of the state that he is independent, while

on the other hand, he is expected to insist on cordial relations with the centre to secure aid for the development of the state. What Dr Abdullah, however is likely to stress is that he is following his father's policies and that he is ready to root out corruption. To make his point, Dr Abdullah has already promulgated an ordinance for the declaration of assets by public men and public servants. Even members of the state council are covered by this ordinance which was promulgated on 21 January 1983. Besides, Dr Abdullah proposes to have a fresh set of National Conterence MLAs. In the valley, he would face very little challenge trom the Congress(I) which may win four to six seats and that too only because of the influence of the candidates

Dr Abdullah may get more non Muslim votes in the Jammu region than his father used to. Take for example, the Hiranagar constituency of Kathua district in Jammu. A veteran Congressman, Girdharilal Dogra, had been returned to the Assembly till 1980 when he was elected to Parliament. When by elections took place Thakur Baldev Singh of the BJP defeated Mr Dogra's brother. The National Conference candidate polled about 3,000 votes. Incidentally, the Congress(1) was defeated by about 3,000 votes. This trend is likely to continue this time also in all the

constituencies of Kathua and other Muslim dominated areas. Thus the National Conference is confident of winning at least 40 seats out of 76 in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly.

If both the Congress(I) and the National Conference fight each other it will only help Jamaat i-Islami and the pro-Pak elements in the valley and the RSS and Muslim communalists in the Jammu region. But there is a strong lobby led by the J-KPCC(I) chief, Mr Mufti Mohammed, among the Congressmen of the valley. This lobby is toeing the line that if Congress has to survive in the valley it will have to fight the National Conference tooth and nail. There are some local Congressmen, in a very small minority, who want Governor's rule after the dissolution of the state assembly. But the Kashmir experts have warned the high command of the Congress(I) that if centre takes this course it might lead to Dr Abdullah's joining hands with Muslim militants. Then the Congress(I) will have to close down its shop in the valley for all times to come

There is a strong section in the Congress(I) led by a very senior Congressman Syed Mir Qasim who is advocating that the Congress should not oppose National Conference but should have a friendly contest so that the possibilities of a coalition government remain open in future.

Syed Mir Qasim(third from right) as minister of civil supplies presiding over a meeting in Delhi ir 1976



Syed Mir Qasim belongs to that class of politicians who still believe in old Congress traditions. He is always outspoken and honest while talking on various political issues. He was the person who had negotiated with Sheikh Abdullah in 1975 on behalf of the Congress. In a long interview to Sunday he spoke on various national problems.

: Qasim Sahab, you were the person who vacated the chair of the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir for Sheikh Abdullah in 1975. You were also the chief architect of the shortlived friendship between the Congress and the National Conference. Why do you feel that the Congress and the National Conference should have friendly relations?

A: Even today my concept is that the Congress and the National Conference should have secular, democratic and socialist ideas. As separate parties both can accuse each other of not being secular, democratic or socialistic. For example when Congressmen accused the Sheikh of having an alliance with the BJP in the municipality elections of Jammu, they were disputing the principle of secularism of Sheikh Sahab. Sheikh Sahab for example accused them of voting for an independent candidate (in the Rajya Sabha elections), who according to him was not secular. But I believe that since both believe in the same ideals they should not have quarrelled among themselves. I did visualise at that time that secular forces would merge. When I thought of the merger I visualised the National Conference merging with the Congress. But Sheikh Sáhab thought otherwise. I did, up to a certain extent, appreciate his argument for keeping the National Conference alive. Even then, both of us thought that we would function as complementary forces to each other, not in confrontation with each other. That has been my view and I thought that this would help in combating the influences of elements which were not secular and democraticeither Muslims or Hindus. This was my concept. To my great disappointment, things have developed in such a way that my wish is yet to be fulfilled.

Q: After the death of the Sheikh there has been a qualitative change in the relations between the centre and the National Conference. Don't you feel that Dr Farooq Abdullah has come much closer to the centre and Mrs Gandhi's family?

A: I have made it abundantly clear that there is a definite and positive change: Farooq Abdullah says he does not want any confrontation with the centre. My impression is that even Sheikh Sahab did not want any confrontation but irritants developed and he reacted very sharply. Therefore, we find a qualitative and

There is no question of hiding the fact that Muslims are generally not happy with the Congress. So they have shown their unhappiness(by not voting for the Congress-I in the Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka elections). Even in the Delhi elections a majority of Muslims did not vote for the Congress.

positive change as far as the relations of Farooq Abdullah and the centre are concerned. Again, unfortunately, as far as the situation in the state is concerned, this positive change is not reflected.

Q: Why? Who is responsible for this?

A: You can ask this question to the president of the Congress.

Q: Can you analyse Dr Abdullah's performance as the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir?

A: This has been too short a period to give either a good or a bad certificate. But thus far I have no complaints against him.

Q: Do you find any specific change in his style of functioning from that of the late Sheikh Abdullah?

A: The style is definitely different. He is young, more energetic and his style is new. I do not find any fault in his style.

Q: What is the main difference? A: He does not want to confront the centre. He has so far kept himself clean. He is very mobile and his age is in his favour.

Q: How would you like to face the forthcoming elections in Jammu and Kashmir?

A: The question of facing the elections does not arise. I would like to appreciate the results of this election. The election result would be a great education for my future action.

India is not a communal country. Hindus in a majority pursue secularism and minorities in large numbers also follow suit. These are the people who wish to fight communalism. There are sections of communalists who generate tension. If we are alert, if we know the reasons we can control these clashes in time.

Q: Would you like to comment on the present communal situation in the country?

A: I, as an Indian, am really worried. The largest minority, the Muslims, feels very unhappy now. And I
find some genuine unhappiness in
their mood. I would like the secular
elements within the Congress and
those who have left the Congress to
seriously ponder over the situation
in the interests of the country.

Q: What should be the first step taken to stop communal incidents from breaking out all over the

country?

A: I have thought over this considerably and I will specifically suggest that the central government, which is run by the Congress, takes a serious note of the manifesto the Congress(I) released before the 1980 Lok Sabha elections in which there was a detailed analysis of the threat of communalism and where very concrete and practicable steps were suggested. An implementation of this would be my first step: fulfilling the promises made in the manifesto of the Congress(I).

And, secondly, I would like to have short-term and long-term steps. Short-term steps would be like ensuring the safety of the life and property of the minorities by having an integrated force of law and order which can ensure this. The long-term step would be to establish a socioeconomic research institute with a modern outlook to monitor social imbalances which lead to communal

clashes.

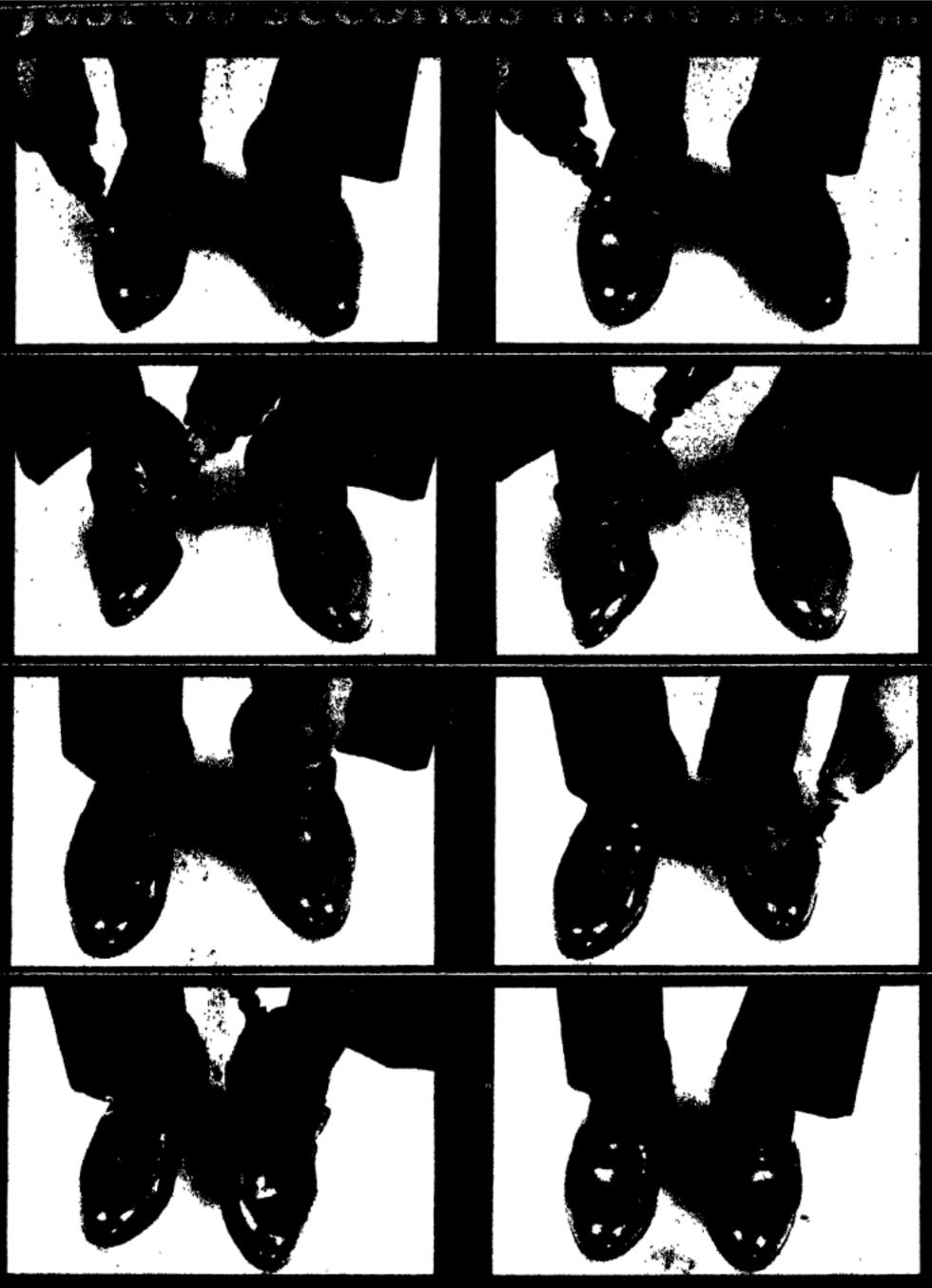
But one thing is clear. India is not a communal country. Hindus in a majority pursue secularism and minorities in large numbers also follow suit. These are the people who wish to fight communalism. There are sections of communalism. There are sections of communalists who generate tension. If we are alert, if we know the reasons we can control these clashes in time. This is not very difficult because the Indian mind is very secular.

Q: What is the main problem of the minorities or say, the Muslims?

A: The main problem according to me, is insecurity. The minorities feel that their property and honour are not safe. The next is economic insecurity because of unemployment. I understand that unemployment is a general problem. But they (the minority community) feel that they are not getting a proportionate share of the fruits of development. This is a socio-economic problem as well as a general problem.

Q: What were the promises made in the election manifesto of the Congress(I) in 1980?

A: There were provisions for a security force consisting of various communities. To have such an integrated force was our first promise. We had promised to have a special peace keeping force. The manifesto read: "A special peace-keeping force



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NSTANT SHINE



Photograph from our files shows former minister of state for information and broadcasting, I.K. Gujral, inaugurating an exhibition on the life and works of the poet Iqbal in Srinagar. (From left to right)

Mr Gujral, Syed Mir Qasim, and the late J&K CM Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah

will be created to prevent and suppress communal violence. It will be composed of people drawn from minority communities, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and others." This force would not be influenced by communal feelings.

There are some emotional issues like language, like personal matters. We had also promised to implement certain decisions on the economic front. These were not vague or attractive promises. All these were concrete promises. I am quite sure that thus far we have not taken all the necessary steps in this direction.

Q: What went wrong during the

last three years?

A: That is what I am saying. We have not implemented our promises.

Q: Why?

A: That is a question for those who implement policies and those who are the policy makers because this is a policy matter. I am not one who is

supposed to implement these promises.

Q: The party which gave these promises came into power with a thumping majority in the Lok Sabha as well as some of the Assemblies. What then are the reasons for the non-implementation of the policies?

A: The reasons are that the seriousness, the dynamism, the capacity to monitor the implementation of the promises made in the manifesto has not developed in this country.

Q: What are your comments on the memorandum submitted to the union government by the Muslim MPs?

A: I have made it very clear about what the intentions of the memoran-

dum were. The intention was to draw the attention of the government to the grievances which were wellknown. Therefore, there was nothing wrong in this. I only suggested and firmly believed that it should not have been Muslim MPs alone (to have submitted the memorandum) because there are equally secularminded Hindus, Christians and others who feel that these grievances should be met. They should have also participated in submitting this memorandum. I told them that if I were there I would have suggested that there should not only be 45 MPs but 200 MPs in which all the other communities should have been represented.

Q: Why are you a member of All

The main problem is insecurity. The minorities feel that their property and honour are not safe. The next is economic insecurity because of unemployment.

They (the minority community) feel that they are not getting a proportionate share of the fruits of development. This is a socio-economic problem as well as a general problem.

India Muslim Majlis-e-Mashaura of which Syed Shahabuddin is the convenor?

A: There is no controversy in this. First one has to understand the background in which this organisation was formed. This was founded by Mehmood who did not have a reputation of being communal. He said that there were various parties which participated in elections. And there were some issues of the Muslims which are not election issues like language, waqf property, graveyards, Muslims personal law, etc. These issues concern all Muslims irrespective of their party affiliations. So, he gave representation to all parties. Viewing these issues from the point of view of a Muslim, free from party affiliations, is the objective of this organisation. Hence there can be no controversy.

Q: As a very senior Congressman, how do you view the situation in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka where Muslims did not vote at all for the Congress(I)? This has happened for the first time in the history of the

Congress party.

A: I have already explained the situation by elaborating the problem. There is no question of hiding the fact that Muslims are generally not happy with the Congress. So they have shown their unhappiness. Even in the Delhi elections a majority of Muslims did not vote for the Congress. There is no denying that fact.

Q: Is the Congress(1) high command aware of the unhappiness of

A: At loust I have made the high command aware of it.

Cooperation with India is in Nepal's interest

and-locked Nepal lies wedged between the Tibet region of the People's Republic of China to the north and India to the east, west and south. India has always been in favour of regional cooperation in South Asia but has been reluctant to take the lead lest it be accused of hegemonistic tendencies. Fortunately, the smaller countries have taken the initiative. Thus, the Prime Minister of Nepal, whilst inaugurating the second meeting of South Asian Foreign Secretaries in Kathmandu in November 1981, observed that: "The concept of regional cooperation was a logical response to the pressing problems of develop-ment..." Because of its traditions and the presence of a Hindu ruler, most Indians take it for granted that Nepal will be a partner in defence. But differences between the two countries have been highlighted over the years. A study of the economics and topography of the region will help us to understand why this is so.

Nepal is composed of three regions. The Terai Plain in the south runs along the Indian border and has close trading and cultural links with India. This region contains 40 per cent of the country's population and accounts for 60 per cent of its gross domestic product. To the north lie the Great Himalaya mountains with peaks that are perpetually snow-covered. Between these two belts lies the Hill Region which contains almost 60 per cent of Nepal's population; Kathmandu Valley, the administrative and commercial centre of Nepal, is situated in this region. Nepal, one of the least developed countries of the world, is a population-exporting country: thousands of hillmen have been migrating to India. But India can no longer provide surplus land or easy employment opportunities for Nepal's population. Today, the Terai has become an outlet for the hill population which once migrated to india. This is creating problems; two require special mention. First, deforestation of the Terai is reducing the country's resources for development and is increasing soil erosion; much of the damage is irreversible and puts the country's ecosystem under severe strain. Second, the settling of hill people in the Terai increases the possibility of political conflict between the hills and plains people. Tension is



Lt Gen. E. A. VAS (Retd)

arising over divergent views on who is "local" and who is an outsider. Though the plains people are native to the Terai, the hills people "view themselves as more representative of Nepali culture...Few of the plains people from the Terai can be found in the power structure of Nepal...Nor can their grievances be expressed through organised political parties."

Efforts to modernise Nepal were started in 1951 through a series of . five-year plans. The first plans successfully established an infrastructure: roads, power and social services. However, in spite of many attempts, the fruits of land reforms and industrialisation have been "erratic, uncertain and tardy." As the people in the countryside have little purchasing power, they are unable to stimulate the small-scale, basic consumer-goods industry. Thus, a broad domestic market never emerges and the development of non-agricultural jobs remains stunted. Some Nepalese propagate the mischievous theory that it is in the interest of India's industrialisation programme that Nepal should remain a non-industrialised neighbour forever.

When China moved into Tibet, Pandit Nehru delcared that Nepal was a part of India's security perimoter and Indian defence plans included Nepal as part of its security obligation. In 1950, a Treaty of Peace and Friendship was signed between Nepal and India. In 1975, King Birendra proposed that Nepal

The proposal (that Nepal be treated as a zone of peace) seems to equate China and India and indicates that in Nepal's world perspective, India is in the same category of power as Pakistan and Bangladesh.

be treated by its neighbours as a rone of peace. This proposal was later incorporated as a major foreign policy goal in the Third Amendment to the Nepalese Constitution. China, Bangladesh and Pakistan have accepted the proposal but India has not endorsed it, explaining that a Treaty of Peace and Friendship already exists between the two countries. The Nepalese government argues that there is no contradiction between a peace zone proposal and the 1950 Treaty; nor is Nepal using the proposal as a means to circumvent the Treaty. India urges that efforts should be directed towards establishing stability in the entire South Asian region; it would, therefore, be logic. al that South Asia, including the Indian Ocean, be declared a zone of peace. Nepal does not accept this. India is also unhappy that Nepal's proposal involves Pakistan and Bangladesh; neither have common frontiers with Nepal. While the proposal seems to equate China and India, it indicates that in Nepal's world perspective, India is in the same category of power as Pakistan and Bangladesh; with China as the only nuclear power, the proposal becomes a covert acceptance of a Chinese nuclear umbrella over the sub-continent. It seems that Nepal's ruling elite is being tempted to align itself with an emerging US-China axis.

There is another aspect in which the proposal is unequal. Today, India and Nepal have an open border, with Nepalese citizens enjoying dual nationality; over 25,000 serve in the Indian Army. In 1981, there were half-a-million Nepal-born immigrants in India; over one million, others used Nepali as their mother tongue. If Nepal becomes a zone of peace, it would necessitate her, maintaining equal relations with allher neighbours; in other words, the border between Nepal and India may, like China's border, be closed and the Nepalese in India would have to carry passports and their entry would be restricted as aliens. The effect of this on Nepal would be severe in economic, social and political terms. Both India and Nepal have vulnerabilities which till now have been subdued by a policy of mutual good neighbourliness, non-interference and restraint. It is to be hoped that neither will lose sight of their respective national: interests for tempting, short-term

benefits.



Jarden* motoritorio malerment tesas testesta no contrato de ser se

Remembering Dr Strangelove

any, many years ago the late Peter Sellers starred in what now appears as a remark-🗝 ably prescient film. It was titled: Dr Strangelove, or, How I learned to stop worrying and love the bomb. Some SUNDAY readers may recall that the essential theme of the film was hawkish Pentagon chiefs and the start of an accidental nuclear war. Peter Sellers' performances were, as usual, brilliant and how we all laughed. Today, it is impossible to laugh and nor has the film been shown recently in the West. For the Strangeloves appear to be in power in the United States: Ronald Strangelove is President. George Strangelove is vicepresident and T.K. Strangelove is a senior strategist placed by his President in the Pentagon. The joke seems to be on us, a fact which the burgeoning peace movements in the West appear to have grasped fairly clearly. I must confess that I was not totally convinced that Reagan was qualitatively different from Carter or Ford or Johnson. I thought that the peace movement and its spokepersons were exaggerating slightly to boost their cause. Not that I grudged them their propaganda. I just wasn't convinced by it myself. I was wrong.

Several weeks ago Reagan referred to the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" that had to be destroyed. In his election campaign he had referred to the Russians as "godless monsters." Then a week or two ago he talked of confronting the Soviet Union in space and announced more money to research laser guns. Many Americans are by now no doubt convinced that Yuri Andropov is a Darth Vader figure and Hollywood fantasies like Star Wars and The Empire Strikes Back are not so remote from reality.

After all, wasn't it President Reagan who announced that he would be playing a star role in the third "film"? Could it be called the End of the Empire? But it was not Reagan's awful rhetoric which convinced me that I was wrong. It was rather a conversation with an old American acquaintance called Bob Scheer, who was passing through

London a few weeks ago.

In the Sixties, Bob Scheer used to edit the American radical magazine, Ramparts. which was staunchly anti-war and soon acquired a gigantic circulation (for a radical magazine, I mean). Robert Scheer is now a senior journalist on the Los Angeles Times. He must also be a tiny bit of a masochist. Who else would spend three and a half years with Ronald Reagan and his



TARIQ ALI

cohorts? Answer: Very few serious journalists. Bob Scheer tunnelled away. He interviewed Reagan, Bush, T.K. Jones, Richard Perle and many others whose names are less familiar even in the United States. There is a old anti-communist weirdo who is an old friend of the Reagans. Their friendship dates back to the McCarthyite witchhunts against leftists in the Fifties. Reagan and this old weirdo had helped to expel the Reds from Hollywood, including the famous scriptwriter Dalton Trumbo, the talented director Joseph Losey and hundreds of others. Reagan's friend has been studying treaties ever since. Yes, treaties. Agreements signed by two countries on pieces of parchment or paper. He wrote a book attacking all treaties as worthless and believes that SALT should be scrapped. He also believes that American cities should have been built underneath the ground since the advent of the atomic age. Is he a nutcase? I think so, but listen to President Reagan's first major foreign policy address in May 1981 at the West Point Military Academy: "My good friend Laurence Beilenson authored a book a few years ago called the Treaty Trap. It was the result of years of research and it makes plain that no nation that placed its faith on parchment or

In the US the freeze movement is a mainstream coalition with parallels in US history. It has brought former members of the establishment and the liberal left together as never before.

paper, while at the same time it gave up its protective hardware, ever lasted long enough to write many pages in history." See what I mean? Scheer is convinced that a "cold war cabal of unreconstructed hawks" is now running the US administration from the White House downwards. His painstaking, albeit masochistic work has paid off. Scheer's labours have resulted in an incredibly powerful and frightening book (With enough shovels: Reagan. Bush and Nuclear war, Secker and Warburg, London). What does the title mean, I can hear you asking? It refers to one of T.K. Strangelove's asides (TK is deputy under secretary of defence for strategic and theatre nuclear forces): "Dig a hole, cover it with a couple of doors and then throw three feet of dirt on top...It's the dirt that does it...if there are enough shovels to go around, everybody's going to make it..." In case that isn't clear, "making it", means surviving a nuclear war.

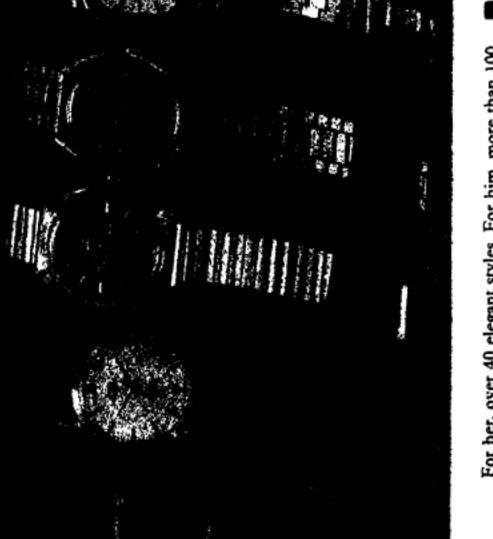
South Asia should be amongst the safest of places since, as everyone knows, we have an unlimited quantity of shovels. Scheer is convinced that Reagan and his nuclear cowboys are capable of a nuclear first strike. When I questioned him about this, he replied: "Well, I think that once you start taking the idea of nuclear war seriously as Reagan does, then anything is possible. Once you've got rid of the idea that nuclear war is MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction-)...then you increase the incentive for a first strike." Scheer's book has sold 40.000 copies in hardback in

the USA alone.

It sold quite well in West Germany in a week. The book is commended by men like Robert Mac-Namara and former US secretary of state, Cyrus Vance. Scheer admits that it is weird that the old liberal establishment which was responsible for prosecuting the Vietnam war is now running scared. In an interview in the book MacNamara mentions three times in the space of a few minutes that we are lucky that there is no madness in the Soviet Union and that Russian leaders are not mad. The implication here is patently obvious. All is not well in Washington. In the United States itself the freeze movement is a mainstream coalition with parallel in US history. It has brought former members of the establishment and the liberal left together as never before. Its success will only be gauged by one fact: will it succeed in defeating Reagan at the next elections or will the Strangeloves be returned to office?



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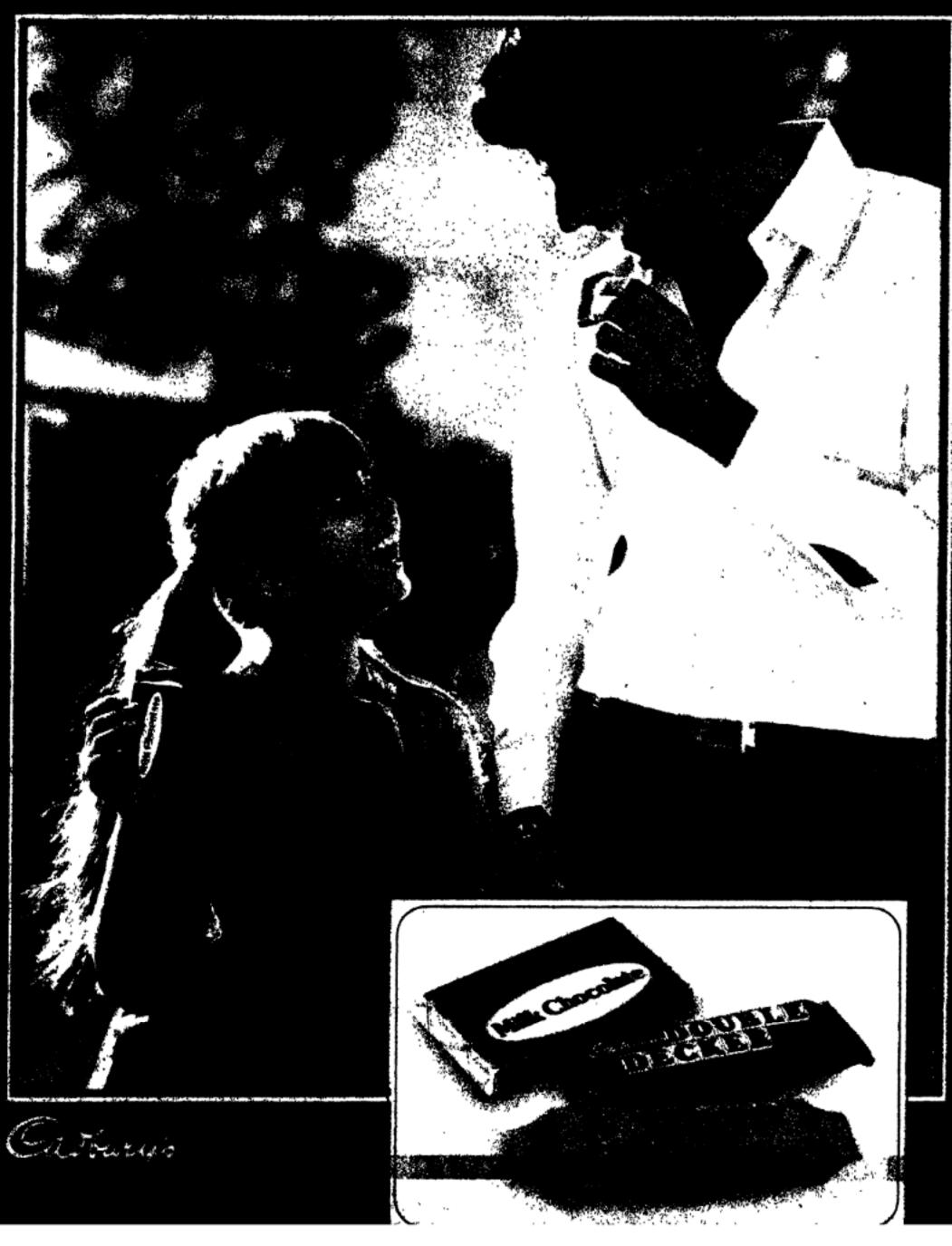
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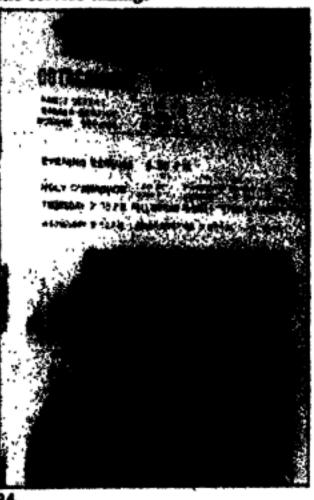
Sometimes, Cadbury's can say it better than words



he stage was set. On Easter. 3 April, Barry Jenkins, the 42-year-old Australian pastor of Union Church would be conducting 'mass conversions' of badagas (Hindus). After the congregation celebrated the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the baptism ceremony would begin. At this juncture the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in conjunction with the Young Badaga Association and the Nilgiris Bar Association would storm into the church precincts and forcibly pull out the about-to-be baptised badagas. The assembled Christians would fight back. Result: a communal clash. The incursion would lead to violence and bloodshed and quite possibly provoke a police firing leaving many injured or even dead. The riot would have sent shock waves all over because the place is Ooty (Udagamandalam), south India's most popular hill station, nestling 7,500 feet atop the verdant, tranquil Nilgiris (blue mountains), of Tamil Nadu. And what was worse, the tourist season had just begun.

Hearing about the mass conversions in which about 100 badagas were to be "forcibly" converted to Christianity, members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Arya Samaj including a saffron clad swamiji who had come all the way from Hyderabad converged at Ooty to prevent the gullible from being "enticed out of the Hindu fold." The sentiments of the advocates and the badagas of the hill town had been whipped up. All had swooped down armed with indignation to ensure that the pastor did not wean away the "innocent" and "illiterate" badagas with the lure of money, food, clothes and promises of handsome jobs in Australia. A Vishwa Hindu Parishad member said that according to their

Board outside Union Church announces the service timings



information about 100 badagas were to be converted on 3 April. They came to know about the conversion because "two of our members had been contacted by the church agents." The RSS top leaders were ready to spring into action and they decided that the Hindu militants would unitedly launch an attack the moment the pastor began his baptism ceremony. Blissfully unaware of the events that were scheduled to take place, Ooty residents and tourists went about their daily chores on 2 April—the regular residents and the tourists beating the heat of the plains by arriving in busloads into Ooty.

In a statement, the Madurai unit of the Arya Samaj made it clear that "the Arya Samaj is very much concerned about the activities of these so-called missionaries of Christianity, alluring the poor people of the Hindu community by offering gifts, food and other things," adding that "mass conversions to Christianity planned by Christian missionaries have created communal tension." The Arya Samaj hoped that the authorities would take steps to prevent the conversions. In December 1982, in a news sheet brought out by the Union Church a reference was made to a man who had been a devotee Lord Ayappa. He had been going on pilgrimages to Sabarimala every year for 25 years. Entitled "Prince of peace," the news sheet announced: This year we are printing a tract in Tamil which is the testimony of a man who went on this pilgrimage for 25 years but did not find peace until he found Lord Jesus Christ." Making a reference to Pastor Jenkins' alleged denigration of the Hindu gods, the representatives of the Arya Samaj state that "this clearly establishes the fact that the aim of the foreign missionaries is not social service but expansion of Christian religious and church activities." The signatories of the statement pointed out that they were not against voluntary conversions but certainly objected to "conversions planned by these missionaries which are schemed by alluring the poor people with false promises and wholesale condemnation of the Hindu religion." It endorsed the extradition of Barry Jenkins. The statement dated 2 April 1983, submitted to the collector of Nilgiris district was signed by Mr M. Narayanaswamy (representative, International Aryan League, Delhi) and Mr S. G. Vamanamurthy, resident, Arya Samaj, Madurai.

What is coincidental is that similar statements were made by other lobbies. The representatives of the Hindu community urged the authorities to stop the conversion being done by "offering bribes and coercion" and demanded the extradition of the pastor. In a resolution passed on 30 March 1983, the executive committee of the Young Badaga Association warned that the mass conversion

SPECIAL REPORT

How a common was a

The peace of Ooty, the place of was to be shattered recent that the Hindu Parishad decided to the Australian pastor to conducting Easter. ANITA Proceeding, reports on how a continuous the last the last to the second continuous cont

slated to be held on 3 April would lead to communal clashes and felt that the matter should be taken to the Congress(I) MLA Mr K. Kallan, representing the Ooty constituency in the Tamil Nadu legislature. The Nakkubetta Badaga Association also complained of the "innocent" badagas being lured into Christianity. Representatives of this organisation told Sunday that they suspected the murky presence of a machiavellian plot for, Barry Jenkins has allegedly trained his proselytisation guns exclusively on the badagas.

The Nilgiris Bar Association also resolved to "condemn the activities of the missionaries of the Union Church" who made "scurrilous attacks against the Hindu religion."

The Tamil congregation with Peter Benjami‡(a) his brother Pastor Victor Benjamin (standing



munal clash verted

hill station of Tamil Nadu, ht when the Vishwa op, at all costs, attempts by an vert Hindus to Christianity PRATAP, who was in Ooty mmunal riot was prevented in moment.

They too demanded the extradition of the pastor. On 2 April, the count-down began. The fuse of a communal conflagration had been lit. That the situation was explosive there was no doubt. Yet despite the determination of all the various associations which had found common ground in the mass conversion to spark a riot, Easter went off peacefully at the Union Church. A contingent of the Tamil Nadu Special Police surveyed the scene with watchful eyes. There was no conversion, no violence, no bloodshed and no lathi-charge.

On examining the situation in most riots, one is inclined to castigate the establishment which cannot jerk itself out of its stupor in

at the back, right, with a book in his hand) and ag at the head of the group on the left)



time to abort a riot. But the Ooty incident was a stark contrast when the establishment shed the garb of its cumbersome anonymity, slipped into the khaki uniform of the superintendent of police (SP) of the Nilgiris and acted with commendable alacrity and tact. He actually succeeded in averting a riot.

SUNDAY learns from reliable sources that the representatives of various associations had met the SP. Mr S. Ramani on 2 April and made known their intentions. The associations wanted the police to step in and stop the conversions, failing which the clash would be organised. Yet this was an absurd demand from the authorities' point of view because there is nothing illegal about conversion. On what legal grounds could the police direct Barry Jenkins to refrain from converting? With barely a few hours left for the deadline, it would be impossible for the police to establish that Mr Jenkins was indulging in "forcible conversions" by luring the "victims" with money or jobs, as alleged. If the police acted without concrete proof, Mr Jenkins could easily drag them to court. Moreover, those about to be converted would not admit that they had been bought over. Even if they did state that they had been lured and forced, they could easily retract later stating that the statements were made under duress. The SP's hands were tied. Yet the Hindu militants had made it clear that if there were conversions, they would go on the rampage. The threat was unequivocal. The only solution open to the police: request Jenkins not to hold the conversion. Credit goes to Mr Ramani in convincing the pastor not to conduct the ceremony. On the night of 2 April, through sheer negotiations, the SP defused the situa-

What is more interesting is that there was no "mass conversion" slated to be held during Easter. This correspondent met Jenkins at his residence adjoining the church on 4 April. Barry Jenkins is an evangelist belonging to an independent evangelican mission: The Churches of Christ of Australia. Clad in a brown shirt and beige trousers, the Australian is of a medium height, sharp features, with a thick black beard that has streaks of grey in it. The most striking feature is his eyes, piercing and intense. His wife, Maureen, sat beside him, breaking off into an emotional tangent which invariably would be cut short by Jenkins with a curt, "Let's stick to facts."

Jenkins told Sunday that only three persons were to be baptised on 3 April: Prasad (20), Madiyan (55) and 70-year-old Sevanan. Not only was the number of conversions grossly exaggerated but the allegation that Jenkins has been converting innocent, gullible badagas rings a bit hollow when the converts in question are 55 and 75-year-old men. "There

is no mass conversion. Conversion is something personal and baptisms take place only after a time of preparation and testing," said Mr Jenkins. He reiterated that there was neither coercion nor inducements for people accepted Christianity on their own volition. Jenkins attributed the allegations of mass conversion to deliberate malicious propaganda to whip up public hostility to malign him and his activities. When asked why he had made the reference to Lord Ayappa which obviously would wound Hindu religious sentiments, Jenkins replied, "It was not our intention to attack or denigrate the Hindu religion or Ayappa pilgrims. We only wanted to recommend that peace can be found through Lord esus." To establish the fact that he had not at any time wanted to create discord between the Hindus and Christians of the region, the pastor pointed out that the Tamil tract referred to by the Arya Samaj was ultimately never printed. The church authorities abided by their lawyer Mr L. Prabhu's counsel that this could be construed as "divisive." Asked Jenkins: "If we wilfully wanted to denigrate the Hindu religion would we not have printed the Tamil tracts and mass-circulated it?" The pastor also denied the allegation that the badagas, a community exclusive to the Nilgiris and who account for 50 per cent of the nearly seven lakh population of the district were being singled out for conversion. According to him, his church has so far baptised only 60 persons of which 36 are Hindus, the rest being Christians belonging to other denominations. Out of the 36 Hindus, only 50 per cent are badagas, the rest belonging to other communities. He said that he agreed to the SP's request of postponing the baptism

Union Church in Ooty where a communal clash was supposed to take place



Continued on Page 38



Avery convincing scene of our Green Revolution. Right?



Right' would be right, if this picture was taken a few deçades ago. But this is 1983.

'Food' is not a subject to be complacent about. Even a 1982 production figure of 132 million tonnes becomes inadequate to a population of 684 million, and growing at 37,000 mouths a day.

Forcing the country to import food again, for the third year.

However, the situation is not beyond control. Modern methods of agriculture do exist—high yielding seeds, effective fertilizers, irrigation and mechanisation. But the need of the hour is mechanisation right down to the small-holding farmer.

Simple mathematics proves the point: what a tractor can plough in two hours, a pair of bullocks will take ninety-six hours—and the farmer loses out in the very

short ploughing and sowing period.

Result: less cultivation of land, poor ploughing, less food output and stagnating

food production.

On the other hand, visualise the benefits of mechanised farming: an average tractor spends 70% of its time ploughing other farmers' lands. In terms of crop value, yields on tractor farms are 63% more. Consequently, tractor farms employ 31% more hired labour per hectare.

No, these are not idle conjectures, but positive conclusions of a National Survey. And these benefits are being reaped in India's mechanised districts—the only

districts giving surplus for procurement.

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ceremony on 3 April to eschew violence after consultation with the church elders. He had made a written statement to the authorities clarifying his position as well as disproving the allegations related to the conversions. It would appear that far from being a Christian fanatic, Barry Jenkins is a liberal man whose social upliftment schemes include the Hin-

dus as well as the Christians Yet, how is it that all the Hindu representatives and militants have today ganged up against him? Ruminating over the episode, Jenkins feels that the only answer is that divisions within the church have climaxed in this unholy situation. Pastor Peter Benjamin of the Baptist Church, Ooty, has been addressing the Tamil congregation of the Union Church for the last two decades. While Peter Benjamin appears to be a committed pastor totally involved in preaching the word of the Lord to the villagers, his brother Victor Benjamin has been spearheading the members of the Tamil congregation on a path of confrontation with Barry Jenkins. The Benjamins and their loyalists being traditional, orthodox, local Christians strongly objected to the rapid and controversial changes that Jenkins introduced soon after his arrival in 1978. The changes that evoked their animosity as Victor Benjamin himself told Sunday were: the removal of the pulpit from where the proclamation of the Lord is read; changes in the seating arrangements so that men and women intermingle and face each other and the formation of the social action committee which they felt tread upon the sacredness of the church. Said Victor Benjamin: "We objected to women doing their tailoring inside the church." Matters came to a head when the six church trustees took over the bookshop on the church premises that sells biblical literature. The social action committee had introduced a small scheme for making jams, pickles, soaps, etc, to generate employment for the poor. These products were sold in the book shop. Victor Benjamin filed a suit in the court that the church premises were being used for commercial activity. The Benjamins stirred such a lot of resentment that all the craft and skills training schemes had to be disbanded. As the six trustees of the church, chaired by Jenkins found the Benjamins to be a serious obstacle in their work, they removed Peter Benjamin and appointed another pastor to conduct services in Tamil for the Tamil congregation. But even today Peter Benjamin continues to hold service outside the church for his loyalists. A further rift has been created by precipitating a foreigner vs Indian issue. So, naturally most of the locals have rallied around the Benjamins. A case was also filed by Peter Benjamin challenging the appointment of the pastor. Both cases are still pending disposal. 38



Victor Benjamin holding a service for the Tamil congregation

It is significant that on 19 May 1982, in a letter addressed to the Tamil Nadu home secretary, the Tamil congregation under the leadership of Peter Benjamin complained that Barry Jenkins with the assistance of his secretary and treasurer Md. Azariah "had begun to convert the church into a forcible, deceitful conversion arena." The memorandum charges that "most of the people who had fallen prey to their tactics and preachings are gullible and poor badagas." According to them over 100 badagas had been converted in three years. The memorialists quoted the Union Church news sheet of 10 March 1980 that when Chandran and Sahadevan were baptised "opposition was evident." When asked about this Jenkins said: "If what we were doing was deceitful would we have published the fact that people were opposing our moves. That alone is sufficient to establish our bonafides. In their case there was opposition from the family because the Hindu elders of the family objected to them taking up Christianity. I think that is a natural and inevitable reaction in India. In our church news, we urged fellow Christians to pray that Sahadevan and Chandran would succeed in overcoming the opposition."

Mr Peter Benjamin has been sending several registered letters to pastor Jenkins. In the letter dated 12 February 1980, Benjamin clearly states that the letter was the final notice as Jenkins had not bothered to answer the questions regarding forcible and deceitful conversions in the letters sent earlier. In the letter Benjamin alleges: "Your object is to increase the membership of the church so that you can obtain more funds from foreign countries." Whether Jenkins is indulging in unlawful activities or whether Benjamin is making motivated allegations is for the courts to decide. But what is pertinent is that the seamy

church controversy has spilled over to pollute other sections of society, in the process gaining momentum. and bringing in its wake the stenchof communalism.

What is surprising is that the Nilgiris Bar Association, presumably an august independent body has also jumped into the fray demanding the extradition of the evangelist. When asked why they were involved in the issue, advocate B.J. Bheeman told: SUNDAY: "We are interested because of the inducements." But he expressed his inability to put forward any

concrete proof.

It is interesting to note that Bheeman also mentioned that the Bar Association had come to know of the happenings because "sources within the church tell us." This is exactly what Jenkins too feels. He cites, for instance, the reference to Lord Ayappa which was published in a private circular. In fact, the words, "For private circulation only," are printed in bold letters on top of the news sheet Yet this news sheet has found its way to the Arya Samaj, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Badaga and the Bar Association. One reason why the Bar Association is so involved in this issue could be that most of the advocates are badagas who resent this "poaching" on their community. Another reason could be that many of them have RSS leanings.

A Hindu-Christian confrontation was mercifully averted on 3 April. The Bar Association and the Badaga Association were all in praise for the SP Mr Ramani for having skilfully defused the explosive situation. Communal clashes between Hindus and Christians and between Hindus and Muslims in the hitherto peaceful Nilgiris is no longer an impossibility. One reason is the staggering RSS infiltration particularly from Kerala. RSS activity in the Nilgiris has shot up in the last four years. While Nilgiris has been affected by the drought, the shakas of the RSS are thriving and spreading fast. All along the Ghat section from Mettupalayam (base town) to Ooty, one can see evidence of a propaganda war between Hindus and Christians. Religion has been cheapened by a barrage of publicity: on one hand one sees boldly painted messages such as "Jesus saves," "Praise the Lord," "Alleluia," "Jesus loves you,"
"Jesus heals," "Jesus never fails,"
"The peace of Jesus," "Jesus the Lord shall fight for you," painted on walls, on signposts and on curbstones. On the other hand, there are the RSS messages "Jaigurdey, the name is God" painted in bold, blood red letters staring at you at almost every curve. The other messages include "Om," "Om Muruga," "Om Hare Ram," "Jaigurudev naam Khuda ka," etc. In the propaganda war, the RSS has established a clear lead. One hopes that chief minister MGR and the state government will take heed to the writings on the wall.



The Natural Look is back

The viritage browns and beiges are back with a bang. So are simple, uncluttered fashion styles. And natural-looking, self-designed fabrics.

in keeping with these international fashion trends. OCM has brought out a new summer

range of fabrics. Made from superior blends of 'Terene' and wool. Fabrics manufactured on their latest machinery. So you get a rich array of designs and weaves to choose from. OCM's new fabrics ideally match the natural look.

OCM Suitings in TERENE)-The Perfect Fabric for the new look.

A night of terror

Rape, violence and murder—the orgy continued for seven long hours in the Jashpur sub-division of Raigarh district in Madhya Pradesh, creating some kind of criminal history. MASOODUL HUQ reports.

ashpurnagar, 20 March: A petty bureaucratic squabble has left a sub-inspector incharge of the entire police force in this land-locked sub-division of Raigarh district (Madhya Pradesh), which shares its borders with two neighbouring states: one notorious for its hardened criminals, Bihar, and the other, Orissa. The subinspector's name is Bhaskar. His immediate superior, circle inspector Rathor, has left for the district headquarters at Raigarh where he is to deliberate on "urgent matters" with superintendent of police (SP), D. Kapdeo. In a bungalow at Jashpurnagar's civil lines lives a man who should technically be functioning as the administrative head of the police force in this sub-division. His name is K. K. Jain. His designation: additional superintendent of police (ASP). His status: "Absconding from duty." His problem: SP Kapdeo

ASP Jain has risen from the ranks to a post which is otherwise reserved for IPS officers. He is in his forties and has an exemplary service record. But over the last year or so he has been on prolonged leave because of his inability to work under a young, brash, superior—SP Kapdeo (the SP, a bachelor, is almost 15 years his junior in age). ASP Jain has recently been served with suspension orders. His fate is uncertain; so too is the fate of Jashpurnagar on this night.

9.40 pm: The telephone at Jashpurnagar PS rings Call from
Gholeng, a small village about six km
from the town on the Ranchi highway, known only for its imperious
Roman Catholic church and Holy
Cross girls' school. The call is being
made from the Gholeng post office
(the village has no other telephone).
The caller: V. P. Mishra, a local
contractor and son of a Holy Cross
teacher. The message: Holy Cross
has been attacked—by about 50
armed dacoits.

Sub-inspector Bhaskar is in a fix. He has no transport at his disposal. He sends frantic messages to the local transport agents in the town. No luck. About half an hour later, he manages to get hold of a private truck and with eight men at his immediate disposal he heads for Ghöleng, taking the shorter, partly kuchcha route.

Gholeng, 10.35 pm: The police "convoy" from Jashpurnagar ar-

rives. The dacoits, after making an abortive attempt to break into Holy Cross school, have fled. The story which SI Bhaskar is told is as follows:

It was around 9.15 pm. The resident students (numbering almost 350) of Holy Cross school were having their prep classes under the supervision of Sister Gulab Kujur. The principal, Sister Anita Joseph, and the mother superior were away. The rest of the nuns, barring Sister Gulab and three others, had gone to attend a late-evening mass at the nearby church. The chowkidar, Peter Beck, found two or three people peeping through the back gate of the school. It was quite dark. Peter thought that the nuns had returned from church. He promptly opened the gate.

About 20 to 25 masked men stormed in. Peter tried to resist. He was hit on the head and shoulder with something heavy. Bleeding profusely, he fled—towards the dispensary within the compounds of the school. Hearing the commotion, Sister Gulab came out. Immediately, she was surrounded by the intruders. "Chabi do (Give us the keys)," someone shouted. Sister Gulab did not realise what they were after. "Kya chabi?" Sister Gulab asked. One of the masked men shoved a gun against her stomach and said, "Tijori ka chabi (The keys to the safe)." As Sister Gulab slowly retreated to the school chapel door she realised what these people had came for. Less than a fortnight ago, the girls had received their annual stipend from the Madhya Pradesh government (under the tribal promotion scheme) which amounted to almost Rs 1.90 lakhs in hard cash. The dacoits appeared to be well-informed. But what they didn't seemto know was the fact that the money is received directly by the students (almost 1,100 of them, including day-scholars). Though most of the money is eventually handed over to the school for the expenses that Holy Cross might have incurred on the students over the last year, it is never kept in the school office the bank is considered a safer place.

Sister Gulab told them that she didn't have the keys and that, in fact, there was no money in the school office. "Telephone, hai?" someone asked. No, she replied, we don't have a telephone. The dacoits seemed relaxed after this: if there was no

telephone here, there was certainly no risk of one of the nuns ringing up the police at Jashpur. One of them asked Sister Gulab for her watch. Just then there was a deafening sound: one of the dacoits had shot at the door which led to an office near the parlour. Sister Gulab took this opportunity to take off her watch; she clenched it in her palm. The dacoits started roughing her up. Her habit had come off. A pair of hands reached for her cross; but she held on to it for life. She heard someonesay in Hindi, "Ise gadi mein le chalo (Take her to the car)." So, they had a car. Or were they lying?

Sister Bernarda who was attending mass at the nearby church heard the gunshot. She started ringing the church bell. Some of the boarders also started ringing the school bell. The alarm had been raised. It was Providence that just then the sound of an approaching motorcycle was heard. The dacoits probably thought that the police had come. They fled. When they arrived at the main road they found that the villagers had started collecting. Delay could prove costly. They did not wait. A few minutes later, Sister Gulab heard a second gunshot. By now, the villa-gers had fallen back; the attempt to

confront bullets appeared futile. Gurdev Singh's was the first pucca house on their retreat route in the outskirts of Gholeng. The dacoits broke into his adjoining provisions shop. There was nothing worth removing from this shop, except biscuits, flour, and mustard oil. While the dacoits helped themselves to whatever they could carry, Gurdev Singh was forcing his wife and children into one of the inner rooms of his nouse. Locking this room from outside, Gurdev jumped over the wall and came out to have a go at the dacoits. He hurled a few stones. The reply could have proved fatal. But Gurdev was destined to live. His neighbour, Firdius Tigga (an electrician at Holy Cross school), unwittingly came to his rescue. Hearing the commotion Firdius emerged from his hut, and before he could assess the situation, he collapsed—shot in the stomach. Gurdev Singh had escaped death because the attention of the dacoits had been diverted to Firdius Tigga.

Perhaps SI Bhaskar does not realise the seriousness of the situation.

Perhaps this is so because he is not told about the corpse which is lying beside the road barely 200 yards away from the Holy Cross school. One adivasi has been killed by the dacoits, but neither the police nor the people of Gholeng know about his death. The body of Joseph Minz will be found next morning—riddled with pellets from a live cartridge fired at point-blank range.

Joseph Minz had come to Gholeng to buy khajoor (a material used to make mats). A resident of Konchra village in Bihar, he had decided to stay with his samdhi (son's father-inlaw), Alouis Toppo, at Gholeng. It was probably the harhya (local rice beer) which Minz had been drinking that gave him the courage to challenge the dacoits. Minz was carrying two kulharis when he emerged from Toppo's hut near Holy Cross school. Swaying under the influence of alcohol, he called out to the dacoits. And he didn't live too long.

SI Bhaskar is unaware of Minz's death. But from the other details he is given, he draws two vital conclusions: First, that the dacoits, having headed further east, must have come from Bihar or the border area which is barely 30 km from Gholeng. Second, having come in such large numbers they must be in possession of a vehicle which they had probably parked in the outskirts of Gholeng.

Since no vehicle, however sturdy, can traverse the unpredictable terrain in the interiors of this tribal belt, SI Bhaskar concludes that the dacoits are still on the Ranchi highway, heading home. If only they can be intercepted before the Sankh river which divides the state of Madhya Pradesh from Bihar...

The police "convoy" hits the road again. Moving at break-neck speed, it reaches Lodam, the last check-post before the Sankh river, in a little over 20 minutes. Here, approximately three km from the Bihar border, SI Bhaskar is told that no vehicle has crossed the Sankh bridge in the last two hours or more. The chase has been futile. The dacoits, SI Bhaskar concludes, have fled. It is well past 11 pm. Time to call it a day. Perhaps he will return tomorrow, cross into Bihar and make enquiries at Manjha' toli, the first outpost beyond the Sankh river.

On 25 March, Madhya Pradesh Chief minister Arjun Singh told an irate opposition in the Assembly at Bhopal that there had been no negligence by the police in Jashpur sub-division. The chief minister was probably unaware of the fact that on the night of 20 March, while SI Bhaskar and his "convoy" moved up and down the Ranchi highway, a group of about 17 to 18 masked men (official figures, arrived at after extensive investigations by the CID), armed with lathis, two pipe guns and belchas (adivasi weapon used for hunting), was playing havoc in Jhar-

gaon, a village barely two-and-a-half km north-east of Gholeng and about half-a-km off the Ranchi highway.

The dacoits had either fooled the police or CM Arjun Singh was fooling the Assembly on 25 March; either SI Bhaskar had seriously believed that real-life dacoits, like their counterparts in Hindi films, refuse to travel on foot, or he was unwilling, with a posse of eight men, to engage a regular gang of dacoits which according to sources in Gholeng numbered over 40. Whatever be the case, the masked men, who were moving on foot, abandoned the Ranchi highway immediately after leaving Gholeng. They were still heading home, but through the interiors: their retreat route was almost parallel to the highway.

Jhargaon was the first village they encountered, and from the west the patel's (mukhia—village head) house was the first on their way. Phuljains Patel was sleeping with his wife in one of the huts around an enclosed courtyard which is his house. About eight to ten masked men broke into his hut. One of them asked in Hindi, "Paisa kahan hai (Where is the money)?" Phuljains replied that he was a poor man, so how could he have cash at home? This was clearly a lie because Phuljains was the head of the village, a landed man, and affluent by all adivasi standards. One after the other, lathis (sticks) began crashing on him. His wife screamed and fled. Sooner or later, Phuljains had to yield because no one in Jhargaon would come to his rescue. And so he did; no one stirred in Jhargaon as Phuljains surrendered Rs 1,300 in cash, a wrist watch, two bedsheets and some clothing.

This was the first attempt which yielded positive results from the point of view of the dacoits; and it was destined to be the last. From here onwards begins a sordid story of senseless violence, ruthless rape and murder. What the marauders hoped to achieve is still a mystery. Led perhaps by sheer frenzy, or frustration over their failure to carry out their operation at Holy Cross school,

Phulkaria: victim of rape



the bandits went about the task of creating some sort of dubious criminal history (21 cases were eventually registered at Jashpur PS—a one-night's record which has no parallel, not even in the Chambal ravines). Were the dacoits trying to pick up all that they could before returning home? If so, how much could they have picked up from these stray villages inhabited by the poor Uraon community?

Whatever their motive, the orgy continued. The next victim in Jhargaon was Andreas Uraon; his house was ransacked. Tarsesius Uraon suffered the same fate. Both offered no resistance at all. In terms of hard cash, the dacoits could not have picked up more than Rs 60 from both these houses. By now it was abundantly clear that there was no point in breaking into houses at random. The more "affluent" houses, like the patel's, had to be detected. But how?

Nature was to play a cruel trick on Plasidious Xalxo (pronounced Khalkho) a 17-year-old student of a boys' high school at Gholeng. He had almost fallen asleep in his little hut in the heart of Jhargaon village when the pressure became unbearable. Unaware of what had happened at the other end of the village, Plasidious came out of his small courtyard to relieve himself. At the entrance to this courtyard stood a gigantic wooden cross, firmly entrenched on the ground—a testimony of the influence of Catholicism over the Uraon community in this area (almost 75 per cent of the Uraons are Catholics). Plasidious did not go very far beyond the cross. He was caught. His hands were tied behind his back. For the next three hours he would not answer that call of nature. In any case, the urge had gone. The will to survive had got the better of him; it made him betray his own people.

Plasidious led his captors first to the house of Albinus Ekka and then to Stephan Tigga's. "Neither of them is affluent. But then, who other than the patel is affluent in this village?" he asks. "They wanted me to identify the affluent houses in the village. What could I do? I took them to the nearest houses. They found nothing. While they broke open and ransacked these houses I was made to wait outside. Two or three people were always guarding me."

While Plasidious slept in Jhargaon, a sordid drama was being enacted in Ghato Toli. The dacoits seemed to be in no hurry. The alarm had woken the village. Those who had not heard Plasidious were awakened by the sound of gunfire. (The dacoits fired two to three rounds in the air to prove that they meant business.) Gabriel Uraon (25) heard the gunshots as well. He had been sleeping in his two-roomed hut with his old parents. It was on sheer impulse that he decided to flee.

41



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Where to? He was not very sure. Perhaps he was heading for Jhargaon. He had left his parents behind, but he was carrying a small tin box with him. The box contained all that he possessed: Rs 150 and some clothes. In one hand he carried an oversized knife. Gabriel did not get very far; he was caught. And before he could put his knife to use, a lathi came crashing down on his shoulder He fell. The rest was just a haze He saw three masked figures standing above him. One was busy with his lathi (Gabriel could no longer feel the blows). A second had a peculiarlooking gun trained on him. The third was screaming: "Saalaa, chhurr se marega (You want to kill us with the knife)?" Gabriel did not die. He just lost his worldly possessions. His body ached But it could have been worse.

At the other end of Ghato Toli Elias Ekka was being hammered The old man did not make a sound Only the blows could be heard by his elder daughter, Phulkaria (14), who was in a nearby hut with her brother, Diseal, and his wife. Behind this hut was a kuchcha path and beyond, a small courtyard. This was Johanne Kispotta's modest house Johanne was sleeping with his son, Albert, in one of the huts. In another slept his two daughters, Rejina (17) and Mary Stella (15), and his younger son, Oshkar. They had a guest with them that night: Phulkaria's younger sister, Paulina (13). The hut had two rooms with a wall in between that went up, three quarters of the way to the roof. Each room had a separate entrance. There was no connecting door between the rooms. Rejina had heard the alarm and the gunshots. She came out of the house, not knowing what was in store. The courtyard was full of masked men. Somewhere in the distance someone was being beaten (it was probably their guest's father, Elias Ekka). Rejina went running back to the room. She shut the door and bolted it from inside. The dacoits came after plundering her father's house. They banged on the door. Four petrified souls shuddered in the dark. They did not move. The banging continued. The dacoits knew that the girls were inside. How would they get in? One of them tried the first door which led to the adjoining room. The door was open. Two masked men promptly entered, but they could not find another door inside which would lead them to the adjoining room where their victims were trapped. The only way to get in was through the gap above the wall which divided the two rooms. The girls screamed when they saw two dark figures dropping into their room. But now it was too late. The intruders opened the floodgates, and soon, hordes of masked men were inside the room.

Oshkar was tied to a pole outside. His eldest sister, Rejina, was dragged out next. She was flung on the ground and ravished—again and again, by four different people (they could have been six or eight—Rejina was in no state to count). Her younger sister, Mary, was laid beside her and raped by two different men. Inside the hut Paulina was being raped, one after the other. Four, five, six... And then she lost count.

Phulkaria Ekka was unaware of what was happening in Johanne Kispotta's house. A class ten student of Holy Cross school at Gholeng, she had just finished studying when she heard the alarm and gunshots. She had just about lit a small lamp when the dacoits broke in. There were two of them initially. Phulkaria's brother, Diseal, woke up with a start He jumped onto the huge pile of wood stacked inside the hut, leaving his sister and wife at the mercy of the dacoits. Diseal remained hidden there till the dacoits left Ghato Toli, Diseal's wite was beaten up, but luckily she managed to escape. She climbed a nearby tree and like her husband, remained hidden till the dacoits left the village. Phulkaria was not so fortunate. Clad in a shirt and skirt, she was dragged out of the hutjand raped repeatedly.

When the rest of the gang returned, Phulkaria was asked to accompany it to nearby Mariain Toli--a village barely two km away through the fields Phulkaria had never been to the village before. She didn't know the way. The dacoits did not believe her Phulkaria took the path which, she assumed, led to Mariam Toli. She was wearing just her skirt; from the waist upwards she had nothing on. And she was bleeding profusely

Time was running out Dawn was barely an hour and a half away. This was perhaps foremost in their mind when the dacoits reached Mariam Toli. Phulkaria stopped short of the main village. Where do the girls stay, someone asked. Phulkaria tried to explain, once again, that she was a stranger to this village, so how could she know where the girls stayed? This was enough to warrant another round.

The Holy Cross school .



Phulkaria was raped again by four of her captors, while the rest fanned out into the villages. When it was over, one of them asked her whether she wanted to go home. Yes, she replied. To her astonishment they let her go. Phulkaria came running back to her village.

The operations at Mariam Toli were brisk There was one case of attempted rape when the dacoits broke into-Piyus Tigga's house. Piyus' daughter, Alisha, was sleeping; she too had a guest on this ill-fated night—a local Uraon girl called Sylvia Ekka (19). Sylvia was stripped and beaten. But the marauders could not afford to rape her, they had to move on, and fast. The next victim was Istha Uraon—her house was plundered. And finally, three men entered Antonis Xalxo's house at the far end of the

village What opposition leader Sundar Lal Patwa later called "a full night of crime," ended with a ghastly murder- –of Antonis Xalxo. In his thirties and a teacher at Agda primary school, Antonis was sleeping in the largest of the three huts around his courtyard. His wife, Karmila, and his six children were also sleeping in the same hut Antonis' parents were sleeping in the hut across the courtyard. Both Antonis and Karmila had been woken by the commotion outside, but they did not venture out. Suddenly, the door flung open (the bolt had snapped). Two masked men with lathis entered the hut. They asked Antonis to hand over whatever money he had; but they didn't wait for his reply. Swiftly, they began searching the room. Meanwhile a third person had entered. He was carrying a country-made gun. The intruders recovered Rs 250 from Antonis' trouser pocket and Rs 20 from a tin box. Satisfied, they left the hut. They couldn't have gone beyond the courtyard when Antonis made a fatal move, he rushed out of his hut, probably to chase them, or to raise a cry so that they could be chased by the villagers. It was lathis first; then a *belcha* came down on his spine. The three men dragged the half-dead Antonis away from his house. Later, on the narrow path which leads to the Agda airstrip, Antonis was shot in the ribs and thrown into a nearby hut.

At around four am, the dacoits left Mariam Toli. From here onwards their movements were to remain a mystery—till the CID began investigations four days later. And what did the dacoits take back with them? Nothing much: about Rs 2,000 in cash, a few wrist watches, clothes, towels, torches, a transistor and some household items.

Till the time of writing, the CID has made six arrests and the Bihar police five. According to the police, all the arrested persons have been identified. Even some of the items stolen have been recovered.

43

Lord Irwin: Saga of broken promises

In the third part of his five-part series on Gandhiji and the freedom movement, MADHU LIMAYE writes that though Lord Irwin was aware of the growing political confsciousness of the Indian people, he was unable to assure the Congress leaders that a Dominion Status would be forthcoming.

Rising temperature

he first years of Irwm's víceroyalty registered a 118ing temperature of political consciousness. While on the one hand, attempts were made to bring the various parties and elements in Indian public life together with a view to reaching an agreement on the future Constitution of India, the younger generation, inspired by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, was on the other hand becoming increasing ly impatient with the moderate counsels of the dominant leadership. The danger of a rift opening between the old and the new loomed large Mahatma Gandhi was critical of these young people who pressed for complete independence. But he was the first to realise that if the British did not make a positive gesture without delay, it would be impossible to hold back the younger generation from discarding the outworn formula of a self-governing India within the British empire. At the Calcutta Congress in December 1928, Gandhiji stepped into the breach with his compromise formula: if the British government did not concede full Dominion Status within one year, Gandhiji said, the Congress would be free to opt for the creed of complete independence.

In the first two years of his office, the Vicerov made his acquaintance with the Indian political leadership. Although he was critical of the Congress party he realised that it was "the most highly organised and powerful body in India" He formed a favourable impression of Motilal Nehru as a "subtle, moderate and reasonable" leader. But he soon became convinced that both Motilal and Gandhiji håd tallen under the "detrimental influence" of Jawaharlal Nehru. Irwin's biographer sees Nehru throughout the Viceroy's period of office as "a stormy petrel scouring the waters of discontent!" He wrote of India's future Prime Minister: "He had stationed himself to the left of even the most extreme

wing of the Congress party but he was still groping for a purpose. He admitted to a puckish delight in stimulating conflict. He could hardly at this time be described as a politician at all. He was a revolutionary Wherever there appeared some tenuous hope of settlement, he was always at hand to urge extreme courses, and his efforts were remforced by a beautiful appearance and a glowing eloquence. Worst of all, in those days he exercised a disastrous influence upon the youth movement of India, and in so doing gave great encouragement to another idol of Indian youth from Bengal, Subhas Chandra Bose." (Ibid, p. 220)

Most Christian Viceroy

The encounter between the new Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi set the tone of the new period inaugurated by Irwin. This is how the Viceroy described the first impression of his meeting with Mahatma Gandhi in his letter to his father:

"I have broken the ice and met Gandhi He really is an interesting personality. Of course, his political position is that England and the English Parliament have no moral claim to be the judges of Indian progress, and in as much as they are constitutionally in the position of exercising legislative authority, what they ought to do is, as in the case of Ireland, to recognise that India should be accorded Dominion Status, and then to meet Indians and discuss the precise methods and the details by which and through which this could be accomplished." (Ibid. p 246)

By the end of 1928 it was impossible for the sensitive Viceroy not to discern the change in the mood of the Indian people. In a letter to his father he acknowledged that he was looking forward to "a stormy year." The patience, decency and integrity of the Viceroy were now widely recognised. He was accessible to all. Gandhiji also never faltered in his belief in the Viceroy's "immaculate code of honour."

Rajaji, who was at one time known as Deputy Gandhi, recalled (30 years later) with admiration and affection the period of Irwin's viceroyalty:

"My colleagues and myself in the Indian National Congress have dealt with many viceroys in India in our campaign for freedom lasting over many decades. I can

Gandhiji flanked by Nehru (left) and Sardai Patel (right) deeply engrossed in discussions



testify to the general feeling among us all that Lord Irwin, as he was then called, was both as a man and as a Viceroy the most Christian and the most gentlemanly representative of Great Britain among them all. I can testify to the fact that Mahatma Gandhi certainly was of this opinion. Faith in a higher power and sincere allegiance to moral principles bound Lord Irwin and Mahatma Gandhi together from the first time when they met and it lasted right through." (Ibid. p.307, italics added)

Dominion status?

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The Viceroy's customary mid-term leave coincided with a change in government in Britain. A minority Labour government had taken over with Wedgwood-Benn as secretary of state. Irwin held consultations with British political figures and, with the consent of the new government, decided to make a pronouncement on Indian constitutional advance. Announcing the decision to hold a Round Table Conference, the Viceroy added that he was authorised by the government to state that it was "implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress is the attainment of Dominion Status" The viceregal announcement produced a violent reaction in Britain. Not only did Tory leaders like Birkenhead and Churchill react sharply, the reaction of Reading and Lloyd George was also negative. Irwin was not perturbed by this. On 3 December 1929, he wrote to his father saying: "I don't think that anything that has been said in England has led me to change my view that it was right to make this statement. It has undoubtedly rallied all moderate opinion here and I feel very little doubt that they will remain thus rallied for some time to come." (*Ibid*, p. 274).

Despite the sincerity of the Vicer-

oy, the onslaught by British politicians on the issue of the Dominion Status declaration produced a most unfavourable impression on the Congress leadership. Gandhiji was torn between his desire for an honourable compromise and his determination not to allow a chasm to open up between himself and the younger generation. Motilal Nehru had also become pessimistic. The sincerity of the British offer was openly questioned. The British government and the Viceroy were accused of hypocrisy. The government apparently did not mean what it said. The prospect of meeting Gandhiji filled the Viceroy with deep misgiving. He had not lost his grip over the reality. He was convinced that Gandhi would be content only if Ramsay MacDonald telegraphed the Viceroy with a definite promise of Dominion Status at the Round Table Conference, and staked the political life of the government upon it. In the absence of such a promise he knew that the Lahore Congress might declare for complete independence and launch a compaign of civil disobedience. (Ibid. p. 275).

No such promise from the British government was, however, forthcoming and events moved to their inexorable conclusion. At the end of 1929 the Congress adopted the creed of complete independence under Jawaharlal's presidentship and Gandhiji was given the authority to start a civil disobedience movement. Gandhiji began his famous 'Dandi March' with a view to violating the salt law which affected the mass of the people. Many British writers acknowledged that it was a gesture of genius. The incidence of the tax was minute but it was a symbol of human oppression, and through this little gesture Gandhiji transcended the hmitations of human condition.

Happy solution!

The Viceroy, perhaps, hoped that the march, which seemed to have

27 March 1942: Gandhiji with Stafford Cripps comes out after an interview



begun so inauspiciously, would peter out in "failure and ridicule." Or, maybe, he knew that the profoundly religious and mystical character of Gandhiji's movement had powerfully appealed to the Indian mind, that the Mahatma was "separated from every other leader in India by a great gulf." He did not wish to martyrise Gandhiji and foster a "Gandhi legend" by arresting him. But the clamour around the Viceroy grew, and powerful sections in Britain and in Anglo-India demanded stern action. The equanimity of the "most Christian" among the viceroys was disturbed by the magnitude of Gandhi's movement and he gave expression to the inner craving for an easy and comfortable way out in a letter to the secretary of state dated 7 Aprıl, 1930:

"The will—power of the man must have been enormous to get him through his march...I was always told that his blood pressure is dangerous and his heart none too good, and I was also told a few days ago that his horoscope predicts that he will die this year, and that is the explanation of this desperate throw. It would be a very happy solution." (Lord Irwin, Letters to the Secretary of State for India, p. 73)

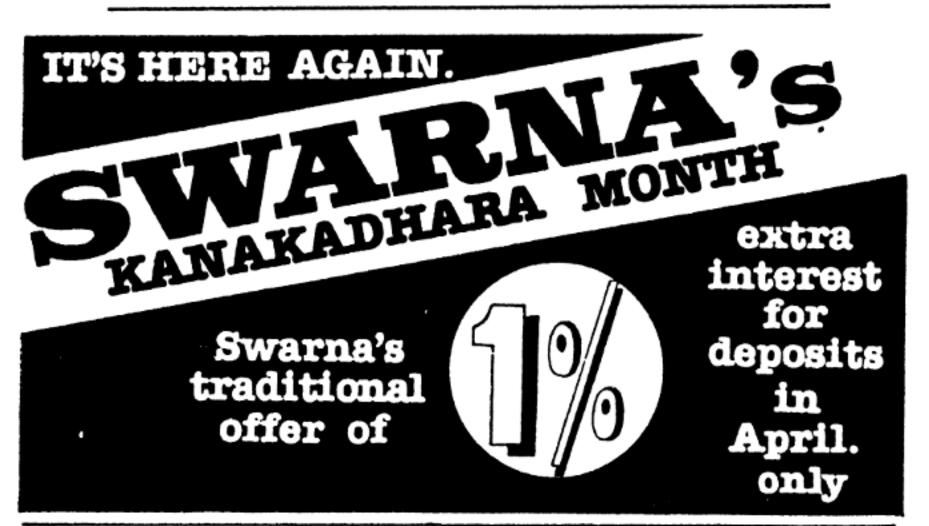
The Christian principles of the Viceroy would not permit him to take ruthless measures; but even the "nobility of his soul" could not prevent him from wishing for Mahatma's early natural death!

Diehards' line

In sharp contrast was the attitude of his senior colleague in the Conservative Party, Winston Churchill. In his characteristic style Churchill used blunt, brutal and forceful words to describe his intentions towards the Indian freedom movement. He opposed an honourable compromise with the Indian National Congress. He warned:

"The danger is that in an unwise endeavour to reach an agreement here in London, the socialist government will commit itself to concessions and extensions of self government which will weaken our hands in the future, without in any way procuring the assent of the ruthless forces of sedition and outrage. Our concessions will, therefore, only be used as the starting-point for new demands by revolutionaries, while the loyal elements and the masses of the people will be the more unsettled by further evidences of British weakness. The truth is that Gandhi-ism and all it stands for will, sooner or later, have to be grappled with and finally crushed. It is no use trying to satisfy a tiger by feeding him with cat's meat. The sooner this is

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realised, the less trouble and misfortune will there be for all concerned". (Speeches of Winston Churchill, p. 4938 Italics added).

Non-violence at its best

Lord Irwin was completely baffled by Gandhiji's non-violent movement. Nothing in his experience had prepared him for this unique phenomenon. The participants in the movement showed exemplary endurence, matchless courage and absolute discipline. Their example was extremely inspiring.

Three weeks after Gandhiji's arrest, Mrs Sarojini Naidu led the peaceful "assault" on Dharasana salt works. Web Miller of the American United Press wrote a moving and graphic description of the unfolding drama of the power of non-violence in action around the world:

"In complete silence the Gandhi men drew up and halted a hundred yards from the stockade. A picked column advanced from the crowd, waded the ditches, and approached the barbed wire stockade .. Suddenly at a word of command, scores of native policemen rushed upon the advancing marchers and rained blows on their heads with their steel-shod lathis. Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the

blows. They went down like tenpins. From where I stood I heard the sickening whack of the clubs on unprotected skulls. The waiting crowd of marchers groaned and sucked in their breath in sympathetic pain at every blow. Those struck down fell sprawling, unconscious or writhing with fractured skulls or broken shoulders... The survivors, without breaking ranks, silently and doggedly marched on until struck down... They marched steadily, with heads up, without the encouragement of music or cheering or any possibility that they might escape serious injury or death. The police rushed out and methodically and mechanically beat down the second column. There was no fight, no struggle; the marchers simply walked forward till struck down."

The Miller dispatch says that hour after hour stretcher bearers carried back many inert, bleeding bodies. He counted 320 wounded, many of them unconscious William Shirer in his fascinating little book on Gandhiji recalls that the story was published in a thousand newspapers the world over It aroused wide spread revulsion everywhere. Gandhiji's non-violence, says Shirer, slowly undermined the foundations of British rule in India. (Gandhi, William Shirer pp. 97-99)

Irwin's embarrassment

The Viceroy tried to play down the significance of these incidents, but his confidence was clearly shaken, his conscience began to prick him, and he began to sympathetically view the possibilities of a reconciliation. Meanwhile, in his letter to the King he sought to cover up his acute embarrassment at the brutalities perpetrated by the British-controlled

police:

"Your Majesty can hardly fail to have read with amusement the accounts of the several battles for the Salt Depot at Dharasana. The police for a long time tried to refrain from action. After a time this became impossible, and they eventually had to resort to sterner methods. A good many people suftered minor injuries in consequence; but I believe those who suffered injuries where as nothing compared to those who wished to sustain an honourable contusion or bruise, or who, to make the whole setting more dramatic, lay on the ground as if laid out for dead without any injury at all. But, of course as your Majesty will appreciate, the whole business was propaganda and, as such, served its purpose admirably well". (Halifax by Birkenhead, p. 284. Italics added).



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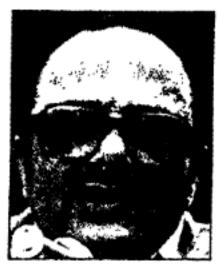
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LOOKING GLASS

Bureaucrats vs technocrats in Madhya Pradesh



Arjun Singh. pressurised

A tug of war is on in Madhya Pradesh between bureaucrats and technocrats. The issue: can technocrats be appointed secretaries? In 1980, the Janata Party chief minister Sunder Lal Patwa started the trend when he appointed Mr R.L. Gupta, chief engineer in the irrigation department, as secretary of the department. The present government hauled up Mr Gupta for certain lapses and asked him to proceed on leave prior to retirement. He

was replaced by yet another technocrat Mr H.V. lyengar who retired recently. The fight is on for this vacancy and there is pressure on the chief minister from the secretariat to appoint an IAS officer.

Will Tamil Nadu order lowering of food prices in hotels?

The Tamil Nadu government might soon formulate a Catering Establishments (fixation of prices and weights) Control Order to bring down the price of food served in the state's hotels and restaurants. But the hoteliers point out that as long as they depend on the open market for their supply, where prices are steadily increasing, they cannot but hike their prices. The irony is that while the state government is planning to bring down prices, all the star hotels and restaurants approved by the department of tourism in Tamil Nadu have started levying a ten per cent sales tax on food from April. Chances are that the order will remain confined to the files.

'Big league' advertisers turn to Malayalam dailies

Leading Malayalam dailies like Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhumi and Kerala Kaumudi now get a regular supply of advertisements from big advertisers who have wisely discovered that the easiest way to influence the migrant Malayalee population in the Gulf states is through their relatives and friends back home. These newspapers are now flooded with advertisements in Malayalam of renowned brands of cigarettes like Marlboro, State Express 555, Sanyo music systems and Rado watches. The idea is to prompt those with 'Gulf connections' to request these brands from their relatives. More than two lakh Malayalees come on leave every year to Kerala from the Gulf states. The advertisements are released by these companies' offices in the Gulf and the rates range from Rs 30,000 to Rs 50,000 for a half page. Most of the agents are not professionals but relatives or friends of the newspaper management and their commission is deposited in their account in India.

Gujarat government piqued at industries ministry

The Gujarat government is piqued at the union industries ministry as industrialists planning to set up units in Gujarat have allegedly been given hints by the ministry to choose other states like Uttar Pradesh or Orissa. The Gujarat government is worried about this subtle pressure because though it is the second most industrialised state in the country, weaning away of industries from Gujarat could undermine its economic growth in the long run.

Bureaucratic reshuffle

As 30 April approaches, the D-day for the moves on the bureaucratic chessboard-to remove from the centre those who have retired or whose five-year term in Delhi is over—a number of names are cropping up to fill in posts which are likely to fall vacant. The post of petroleum secretary, for example, presently held by Mr Lavraj Kumar might fall vacant. Mr Kumar has been appointed member-secretary of the energy board, which is, in effect, a fulltime job. If Mr Kumar leaves, there are chances that his successor might be Mr Vardarajan, currently secretary in the department of science and technology.

Shiv Shankar's wrath

Union minister for energy, Mr Shiv Shankar, who is not in the good books of the Congress(I) high command after the defeat of his party in Andhra Pradesh, is reportedly taking petroleum department officials to task in a bid to get back the people's confidence in his party in Andhra. The three LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) explosions in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secun. Shankar: gaining confidence?



derabad resulted in the deaths of the famous novelist Medireadi Sulochana, a retired IAS officer, Mr Mohammed Abdullah, his wife and maid servant and the third was a suicide case. In Sulochana's case she borrowed a neighbour's Indane gas cylinder with its regulator and rubber tube and tried to fit it on to her Calgas stove. She did not realise that the gas was leaking and it exploded when she switched on the electric light. In the case of Mr Abdullah, he informed his gas dealer about the leakage of his cylinder and by the time the mechanics came his servant used the kerosene stove near the leaking cylinder which exploded. However, these accidents provided Mr Shiv Shankar the opportunity to don the mantle of saviour of the people, after the NTR tornado swept his party from its ruling position. He promptly made a big fanfare about transferring the divisional managers and their assistants of the three companies which had distributed the gas cylinders.

PUNJAB

The Akalis demonstrate their strength

But a heavy price is paid for it

Chandigarh: The 4 April rasta roko demonstration by the Akalis stunned the people, the administration and even some sections of the Akalis themselves, with the ferocity of its violence and bloodshed. The incident left about 30 people killed, hundreds injured and property worth lakhs destroyed. Although the Akali Dal president, Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, had given the assurance that the demonstration would be peaceful, political circles in Punjab were not quite convinced. And when, two days before the demonstration, the Sant directed his workers to resist arrest, it was evident that the rasta roko would, in fact, not pass off peacefully.

The demonstration was organised, as one senior Akali leader said, as a show of the party's strength and as a warning to the centre not to underestimate the Akali Dal. The Dal did prove its strength but a heavy price was paid for it. The rasta roko also signified the victory of the hawks over the moderates in the party, the latter having failed to produce any

results during the tripartite talks. It also proved that the extremist elements are slowly consolidating their hold in the party. The demonstration not merely succeeded but also delivered a deadly blow to the government. And it brought out the difference between the two parties. On the one hand was the Akali Dal, which although it was riven with dissension, came together in great numbers to make a success of the demonstration, and on the other was the ruling Congress(I), a divided house which could do nothing to counter the Akalis politically but just left it to the police and civil officers to tackle the explosive situation.

Thus bereft of political will, the state government mobilised massive units of the CRPF and Punjab police all over the state. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Akalis were fully prepared for the occasion and at most of the places were well armed with swords and other weapons. Significantly, however, it was the CRPF which fired at most of the places while encounters between

the Punjab police and the Akalis were few and far between.

Two disturbing factors emerged that day. One was the participation of large numbers of women and youth in the demonstration. In Sangrur district, for instance, which was once considered a communist stronghold, women and young men far outnumbered the older men. The other factor was the unprecedented support extended to the extremists. It was evident that wherever the extremists led the demonstration, the numbers of workers were unusually large. At Jullunder's Kiratpur highway, Sukhjinder Singh, a pro-Khalistan leader, led about 15,000 workers while at Patiala, Jathedar Tohra, another extremist leader, had about 10,000 workers with him.

All over the state Sikh shopkeepers downed their shutters voluntarily while the Hendu ones were forced to do so by the militant Akalıs. The situation took a somewhat nasty turn in Patiala and Amritsar, as some of the Hindus refused to shut their shops when the Akalis forcibly got them to do so. The extremist elements also took advantage of the situation and threw bombs in thickly populated areas of Amritsar, leading to communal tension. The people in those areas (Dal Mandi, Namak Mandi and their adjoining localities) complained that the Punjab police were merely silent spectators while the extremists roamed around freely. They then demanded that the Punjab police be removed and the CRPF be called instead. The Akali leadership, on the other hand, alleged that it was the CRPF which massacred the innocent Sikhs and fired on peaceful demonstrators. The SGPC chief described the 4 April happenings as another Jallianwala Bagh and demanded the immediate dismissal of the Darbara Singh government.

The Akali Dal president, Sant Longowal, said that if the centre wanted to ensure peace in the state, then it should withdraw the CRPF from the state. He also said that the success of the demonstration had proved that the Dal was united and this was "a slap on the face of those who say we

The Akalis stopping traffic during their demonstration



are on the verge of a split." When asked if the centre has conceded most of their demands, the Sant maintained that nothing had been conceded. "Only verbal assurances have been given. Nothing concrete has been given. We will continue our morcha till our demands--transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab, transfer of Punjabi-speaking areas to the state and ownership of waterheads at Bhakra to be given to Punjab-are met," said the Sant. He also alleged that the chief minister, Darbara Singh, was implicated in the Pratap Singh Khairon murder case. He demanded a judicial probe into the incidents and the dismissal of the

Darbara Singh ministry.

In the adjoining building, Nanak Nivas, militant Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, described the 4 April demonstration as just the beginning and said, "The blood of the martyrs will not go waste." He added that the Sikhs "will not rest till they break the chains of slavery." Political observers in the state, however, say the call for the demonstration was a desperate move on the part of the Akalıs whose morcha was losing momentum and whose party was getting fragmented But, they say, the state government failed to handle the situation tactfully. According to them, the mass arrest of the Akalis before the demonstration, in fact, united a demoralised party. There might even have been a chance of the Badal Ravinder Singh group coming out openly against the extremists in the party, but the arrests and subsequent events totally changed the scenario

On the other hand, the continuous harping by the state government that extremists were surreptitiously operating from the Golden Temple, was not accepted by even the moderate Sikhs. The state BJP chief, Dr. Baldev Prakash.too.argued that not everything can be linked with Nanak Nivas (in the Golden Temple). Chandigarh is 300 km from Amritsar, Mukarian is over 70 km, Batala is around the same distance, so how could extremists kill or throw a bomb and then come back safely to the Golden Temple, asked Dr Prakash. He further added that although there is no apparent communal tension in the state at the moment, if the situation is allowed to remain as it is, it will be difficult to maintain peace in Punjab. Already, there is talk about another Assam being repeated in the state. Moreover, on 8 April, Sant Harchand Singh Longowal made the disturbing announcement of the party's resolve to form "an army of 100,000 volunteers to do or die for the Sikh cause." Punjab is politically and strategically too important to be allowed to drift like this, but at the moment the centre seems to have no solution in the mind.

Harpal Singh Bedi

POLITICS

Just another party to adorn the galaxy?



Maneka Gandhi at the launch of her party: an extravaganza

New Delhi: Since she left the Nehru-Gandhi household amidst controversy a year ago. Mrs Maneka Gandhi had, on many occasions, denied that she was in politics. Whenever anyone asked her publicly about her political future, she exhibited a skittishness reminiscent of adolescents. This year, however, she started saying that she was about to launch a political party. So, on 3 April, the organisation called the Sanjay Gandhi Vichar Manch, shed

its "apolitical" scales and donned the colours of a political party with the name, Rashtriya Sanjay Manch (RSM) The formation of the RSM was the logical, but painful, culmination of the phase of Sanjay Gandhi politics which Mrs India Gandhi had introduced in the polity after the imposition of Emergency in 1975.

If a stock-taking of Mrs Maneka Gandhi's one year in politics is done, then she would emerge as a person who has drawn large, curious, crowds

A share in the shares

New Delhi: The succession case filed by Maneka Gandhi and her minor son, Feroze Varun Gandhi, has been finally admitted by the district judge of Delhi. Mr Jagdish Chandra. The case, listed as probate case No 2A 82, came up before the judge on 6 April, more than a year after it had actually been filed. Soon after leaving 1, Safdarjang Road last year, Maneka Gandhi had filed the petition, under Section 278 of the Indian Succession Act, seeking a letter of administration of the estate of the late. Sanjay Gandhi.

The amount of money involved in the case can be judged from the fact that the amount stated for the court fees is Rs 4,73,058. The probate is being sought regarding shares held by Sanjay Gandhi in 16 companies, including some multinationals. When the case came up for preliminary hearing on 6 April, Mr Shujaatullah Khan, counsel for Maneka Gandhi, read out the list of companies whose shares are involved in the litigation. They were: Pieco Electronics and Electricals Ltd (formerly Philips India Ltd), Union Carbide India Ltd, Bajaj Electricals Ltd, Tata Hydro-Electric

Power Supply Co. Ltd. the Elphin stone Spinning and Weaving Mills Ltd. India Forls Ltd. Brittannia Industries Ltd. Goetze (India) Ltd. ASEA Ltd. Bimetal Bearings Ltd. Rajdhani General Traders Private Ltd. Maruti Ltd. (in liquidation), Western India Tanneries Ltd. Fertilisers and Chemicals of Travancore Ltd. Drilling Equipment Private Ltd., and Mohan Rockey Springwater Breweiies Ltd.

Of these firms, Maruti Ltd and Rajdhani General Traders (a transport company) were started by Sanjay Gandhi. In the initial hearing, Mr Shujaatullah Khan said that among those on whom the notices may have to be issued, were Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister and Rajiy Gandhi. MP In the petition. Maneka Gandhi has contended that as her husband had died intestate, only she and her son were the heirs to his estate.

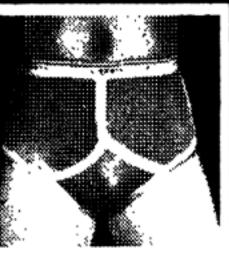
The case has been listed for issuance of notices on 4 May. From available reports, the estate now being claimed by Mancka Gandhi is only a part of the property left behind by her husband.

A Special Correspondent

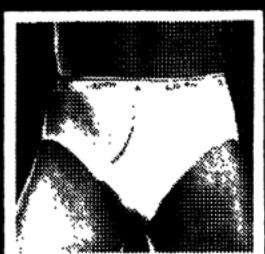
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wherever she has gone and addressed public meetings. In Amethi, the Lok Sabha constituency of her late husband, now represented by Mr Rajiv Gandhi she created shockwaves for the Congress(I) when she had a successful tour in September last year. In the Andhra Pradesh election campaign, where she shared the platform with Mr N.T. Rama Rao, she got an enthusiastic reception and four of her party men became MLAs in the pro-NTR and anti-Indira Gan dhi wave which swept that state in January Two Congress(1) MPs, in cluding a former deputy minister (who was dropped by Mrs Gandhi) have recently joined her party. In itially, she started off with only one MLA, Mr Akbar "Dumpy" Ahmed She now has four in Andhra Pradesh, two in UP and one in Bihar. She has, however, not been able to effect even one significant detection from the Congress(I) ranks thus far. Apart from Mr Akbai Ahmed, no other prominent Sanjavite has been induced to join her

The launching of the RSM on 3 April was not a spectacular show. It anything, it was an exhibition of the political immaturity of the person behind the organisation. The RSM leadership tried to effect some defections from the ruling party to add glamour to its maugural show. But the function was a damp squib-there were hardly 5,000 delegates in attendance. The new party's president delivered her address in English, ostensibly for the benefit of the "delegates from the south" (An organiser told SUNDAY that there were around 800 delegates from that region alone) Had it not been for the eloquent speech in Hindi by Mi Akbar Ahmed, who delivered the welcome-address, Mancka Gandhi's supporters from the Hindi-speaking states would have gone back without understanding a word of what was going on

The shamiana in which the RSM was launched looked more like the ones used for posh weddings. The Ferozeshah Kotla grounds in central Delhi have seen many political conventions before, but such a fancy shamiana may never before have been erected on it. Inside—there were several chandeliers hanging from the roof. The dais had a backdrop of the party's flag, half green and white, with the colours vertically placed, and a map of India superimposed in saffron in the centre. (The map showed a number of neighbouring countries as part of Indian territory-apparently, whoever drew the flag, did not care for such minute details.) On the two ends of the party flag, full-length portraits of the late Sanjay Gandhi and Mrs Maneka Gandhi were painted. The roof of the dais too had chandeliers. Though the organisation claimed that about 12,000 delegates attended, from the size of the pandal and the floor area

provided for seating, the audience could be estimated to be between 4,500 and 5,000 persons only

The attendance in the press gallery was unprecedented. A number of foreign mediamen and television crew covered the event. The organisers apparently had kept Congress culture in mind, the main gate of the convention was named "Bapu Dwar," after the father of the nation. The camp where the delegates stayed was named "Nehru Nagar" The meeting began with the singing of the national song, "Vande Mataram" and ended with the national anthem The RSM volunteers sported "security" badges. Among these "security personnel" was Mis Maneka Gandhi's vounger brother, Viren Singh. He was sitting in the press enclosure, but slipped away as soon as the cameramen trained their equipment at him.

In her inaugural address, Mrs Maneka Gandhi said that she was expecting mid-term polls this year. So, the RSM decided to build up the party on a 'war footing" to face the polls. The estranged daughter in-law of the Prime. Minister also, hit out at the Congress(I) mentioning that the party was "recking with corruption" and that there was no leader in the ruling party against whom there were no charges of corruption and nepotism. She charged that the Congress(I) had become more of a "caucus" than a mass-based party.

From the manifesto of the RSM, it is clear that it is essentially a right-wing party, of the variety which was last seen in Indian politics under the banner of the erstwhile Swatantra Party. It is opposed to the public sector and stands for a laissez-faire pattern of economic growth. It speaks of a "truly functioning democracy," while in the same breath, its president defends the period of Emergency rule which the country experienced for 19 months after June 1975.

Now that her political party has been launched, Mrs Maneka Gandhi has joined the galaxy of the leaders ot the splinter political groups who adorn the political horizons of this country. She has made no secret of her rightist stance: from the map of India shown in her party's flag, one even gets the feeling that her party shares the "Vishal Bharat" philosophy of the extreme rightwing, communal, Hindu organisations, like the RSS Mrs Maneka Gandhi has proved her mettle in drawing curious crowds. Will she be able to do likewise as a political leader? She seems to be in a hurry to reach the top, but politics is a painful game of patience.

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya

RAW

On her majesty's secret service?

New Delhi: The director of India's top intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), which is entrusted with foreign intelligence gathering, was to refire on 31 March A grand send off was planned for the outgoing chiet, Mr N F. Santook, by the RAW officers on the afternoon of 30 March. The venue was the main dining hall of the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, the extravagant complex built for the Asiad. The farewell was≰o take place at 3.30 pm. At 2 pm, when all the tood arrangements were complete, word went round that the function had been called off. The officers had contributed money out of their pockets for Mr Santook's farwell. They, therefore, were crestfallen on more than one account. But they were in for more surprises the next day.

The government had not decided on Mr Santook's successor and so, the seniormost additional director, Mr G. K. Saxena (known to his friends as "Garry" Saxena), was to take over acting charge of the post of director from Mr Santook on the evening of 31 March. But Mr Saxena did not know where to find Mr

Santook that day On 1 April, therefore, without the formalities of the handing over and taking-over having been gone through, Mr Saxena assumed officiating charge of the top post

Slowly, the reason for the cancellation of Mr Santook's send-off and his sudden disappearance became known. On the night of 30 March, with barely 24 hours to go for his superannuation, Mr Santook had flown out of the country, to the USA. So much so that even his immediate subordinate, who was to occupy his chair the very next day, was kept in

the dark.
The deta

The details of this unusual happening in the RAW headquarters became known to Sunday's sister publication, The Telegraph. On 9 April, The Telegraph reported Mr Santook's disappearance from the capital on the eve of his retirement. It was reported that in the absence of a formal handing over of charge to Mr Saxena, a piquant situation had arisen. Bombay's Free Press Journal followed up the story with a sensational headline. On 10 April, the Press Information Bureau (PIB) of

TAMIL NADU

the government issued a denial. It was, perhaps, the most strangelyworded statement issued by the PIB in many years. The statement said. "Government are astonished at the reports published yesterday by The Telegraph, Calcutta and today by Free Press Journal, Bombay, alleging that Shr: N F. Suntook, director of the Research and Analysis Wing of the cabinet secretariat, has disappeared from the country in mysterious circumstances on the eve of his superannuation from service. These reports are products of a fevered imagination and are entirely untrue. They reveal either extreme gullibility or mischief on the part of the newspapers, and are incompatible with responsible journalism It is deplorable that a public servant of proven loyalty has been so maligned

"It is authoritatively stated that Shri Suntook has gone abroad on urgent official duty and is expected to return to Delhi in two or three

days."

It is surprising that the PIB, throughout its statement, referred to Mr Santook as the "director of RAW." Had any notification been issued either extending his term in that post or re-employing him? The nature of the "urgent official duty." naturally, was not specified. Moreover, could a person, who was no more in government service, be sent out on official work? While the PIB has used all sorts of adjectives to malign investigative journalism, it failed to clarify a vital point in its press note of 10 April (which, incidentally, was a Sunday).

A few days before the publication of the news item in The Telegraph, a number of newspapers in the capital had carried small, one paragraph news items indicating that Mr Saxena had replaced Mr Santook as the director of RAW. The PIB did not issue any clarification then So, which role of the PIB is correct. The one in which it does not contradict reports about the changeover at the RAW headquarters, or the one in which it refers to Mr Santook as the "director" ten days after his date of retirement? One only hopes that while decrying reporters who dare to take a look at the chinks in the government's armour, the PIB is not being mischievously gullible Moreover, The Telegraph never cast aspersions on the officer's lovalty.

Did Mr Santook indeed go on government work? Or was it a mission privately entrusted to him by the powers that be? It is true that the nature of Mr Santook's work, till 31 March, was shrouded in a veil of secrecy. But can such a veil be allowed to shroud unusual goings on in the government, when all rules are flouted? Is it possible that the "urgent official duty," was authorised privately?

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya

When legislature confronts judiciary

Madras: The legislature and judiciary in Tamil Nadu have locked horns over a controversial issue DMK MLC and MGR's *bete noire*, Mr Arcot Veerasami, has once again succeeded in whipping up an issue that has become the topic of heated debate in the Assembly, in public and

in legal circles.

Mr Veerasami, who is also the DMK headquarters secretary, filed a quo warranto petition against chief minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, demanding to know on what grounds he continued to function as CM of the state when he had committed a constitutional impropriety. The impropriety referred to was the CM's remarks that courts were according a step-motherly treatment to the state government by granting stay orders indiscriminately, thus affecting the progress of work undertaken by the government. He made these comments on the floor of the Assembly on 2 February, 1983, while replying to the debate on the Governor's address. Mr Veerasami contended that MGR had violated Article 211 which stated, "No discussions shall take place in the legislature of a state with respect to the conduct of any judge of the Supreme Court or High Court in the discharge of his duties." According to Assembly Rules (90), "A member, while speaking, must not reflect upon the conduct of the president or any government or any court of justice."

Justice T. Sathiadev of the Madras High Court admitted the petition and issued a notice to MGR. The notice became controversial because technically it could be seen as impinging upon the special privileges accorded to the House. The arm of law, it was construed, had stretched

MGR. constitutional impropriety?



beyond its jurisdiction. Article 294 of the Constitution which relates to the powers, privileges and immunities of state legislatures, assures unfettered freedom of speech to legislators within the House. Moreover, under this Article no member is liable to proceedings in any court regarding anything said or any vote given by him within the House CPI(M) leader, Mr R. Umanath, who raised the matter in the Assembly was of the opinion that the CM should not respond to the notice as it would otherwise undermine the authority and prestige of the House. Needless to say, Mr Umanath became the instant hero of the Assem-

bly at that moment

As it was a matter that concerned the privileges he enjoyed as a member of the House, MGR referred the matter to the speaker of the state Assembly, Mr K. Rajaram, who after mulling over the issue for a week directed the CM to ignore the notice. Mr Rajaram decreed, "You do not have to place yourself at the disposal of the High Court " He felt that as MGR had made the comments on the floor of the House, the notice issued by the court was tantamount to a breach of privilege. The speaker went a step ahead and said that the persons responsible for such proceedings are hable to be proceeded against. Mr Rajaram referred to the Karnataka High Court judgment in the A. K Subbaiah case in 1979, where the need for a healthy understanding between the judiciary and the legislature was underscored, that the two should exercise their privileges and powers in mutually exclusive areas so as to avert any rupture, which would then undermine the integrity of the two bodies in the eyes of the public. He regretted that the Madras High Court had raked up an issue that had been amicably settled in the past.

Indeed, most similar cases that came up in the past have been ruled in favour of the legislature. A significant precedent is the Supreme Court ruling regarding a reference made by the President in an issue involving the Uttar Pradesh legislature and the state judiciary. The SC judge observed that under Article 194, the freedom of speech conferred on the legislators is absolute and unfettered. In other words, even if the remarks violated Article 211, the member would not be liable for any action in court. Again, in 1970, the Supreme Court made a similar ruling in the case of Mr Tej Kiran Jani and others versus Mr Neelam Sanjiva

Reddy. The Calcutta High Court in 1951 ruled in favour of the protection enjoyed by the members of Parliament "even though the words uttered by them in the House may be false and malicious to their knowledge." The Orissa High Court had observed in 1958 that "though a speech delivered by a member of the House may amount to contempt of court, no action can be taken against him in a court of law as speeches in the House are privileged."

In the early Sixties the judiciary and legislature came perilously close to a confrontation. In a ruling the High Court had then passed strictures on the government for the appointment of law secretary, Mr Alagiriswamy, as the government pleader. The matter was raised in the Assembly and a notice of privilege was given. A contempt of court petition was filed against the then speaker, Dr V. Krishna Rao, who,however, ignored the notice. The matter was literally settled out of court. The Assembly was prorogued, the notice of privileges lapsed, thereby neatly eschewing the issue and the contempt petition was dismissed. As far as Mr Veerasami is concerned, the crises appear to have boomeranged because a privilege was sought to be raised in the Assembly by an AIADMK member, Mr V. P. Balasubramaniam, against Mr Veerasami for filing a quo warranto petition for what the CM said on the

floor of the House. The notice issue which was picking up steam took a sudden dramatic turn with justice Sathiadev directing the TN advocate general to ascertain whether CM MGR had him in mind when he made the damaging statements in the legislature. This was the unexpected outcome when three persons—two advocates and a former speaker—filed writ petitions stating that Mr Veerasami's petition should not have been entertained. In this petition, a reference was made to the fact that judges against whom the comments were made should not try the case. Losing sobriety and equanimity, the visibly upset Justice Sathiadev said, "I am a very sensitive person you know, and your submission really set me thinking. I could not sleep last night." He declared that had he even suspected that the barbs could have pertained to him, he would have washed his hands off the case right at the beginning. But he tried to console himself that as the statement referred to indiscriminate grant of stay orders, the comments could not have referred to him because he, and the whole bar would endorse this, is against granting stay orders unnecessarily. As his notice to MGR had laid himself open to censure, Justice Sathiadev took the opportunity to explain the reason for the issuance of the notice. "Whether a citizen of this country could resort to some

remedial action or the other when somebody violated the Constitution from a privileged position was the question thrown up by the writ petition and it would have to be decided one way or the other." That was why he admitted the petition and "not from any other motive," explained the judge. And to prove his point Justice Sathiadev refused to admit another writ petition filed by Arcot

Veerasami praying that MGR be restrained from functioning as CM till the disposal of the quo warranto case. Mr Veerasami appears to be hell-bent on dislodging MGR even if it be temporarily. But the petition had to be withdrawn because the judge refused to admit it with the comment "I don't believe in granting stays unnecessarily." Anita Pratap

'I did not want to contest'

Bhubaneswar: In order to stabilise the merger of the Lok Dal (K) with the Janata Party, Mr Biju Patnaik has made it clear to the central party leadership that the members of the erstwhile Lok Dal (K) should be "suitably accommodated in the Janata Party." But Mr Patnaik himself is not feeling too comfortable in the company of some leaders like Prof. Madhu Dandavate who was recently elected as the leader of the Janata Party in the Lok Sabha. Biju Patnaik spoke to Sarada P. Nanda at the Janata Party office in Bhubaneswar. Excerpts:

Q: What prompted you to seek election for the leadership of the Janata Parhamentary Party against

Prof. Dandavate?

A. It was not my decision to contest the JPP elections. It was George (Fernandes) who proposed my name. I went to the (committee) meeting and said that there should be no contest, everybody should withdraw in favour of the consensus candidate. But the Bombay provincial committee had already proposed some names. It was only then that I agreed to a contest for the leadership

Q: Did you formally file your

nomination?

A: I did not file my nomination George got a form and put my name. Then, we went to Calcutta to take a look at the West Bengal party affairs. There we decided that there should be no elections. We formed a threeman committee and after taking everything into consideration, we

Biju Patnaik: agreeing to contest



selected the office-bearers.

Q: Were you interested in becoming the leader of the Janata Parliamen-

tary Party?

A. I was not interested. The post has nothing political about it. I felt that I would get stuck in that kind of job. Mr Dandavate is the right person for that type of job.

O: Why do you think Prof. Dandavate was interested in the leadership?

A. He wanted it after that incident in Parliament where he produced a revolver.

O: Did he seek re-election to refurbish his image after that incident?

A. You are right. His image was certainly damaged after the incident in Parliament

Q: Is it true that Morarji Desai campaigned against your candidature in this election?

A. No, no. On the contrary Morarjibhai did not approve Dandavate's act in Parliament.

Q. The Lok Dal (K) added nine members to the Janata Party's strength in the Lok Sabha and seven members to its strength in the Rajya Sabha after the merger. But none from this group has been elected leader of the Party in either House. Do you not feel neglected?

A: If I would have contested I would have won. But I simply didn't like that job.

Q: Did George Fernandes consult you before proposing your name?

O: Would you say that the election was a smooth affair?

A: It was not a serious affair since it was bereft of competition.

Q: Do you think you could have won if you had contested?

A: I am sure I would have won. In fact, there is no question of thinking. I can win even now. I made it clear to the committee that I was not interested in contesting. I only want that the group which has joined the Janata Party should be suitably accommodated in that party.

Q: Do you think that the assimilation of the erstwhile Lok Dal (K) members in the Janata Party has been

smooth?

A: My demand that the Lok Dal (K) members be given suitable posts was to make the assimilation smooth.

Q: Was George Fernandes in-

terested in the elections?

A: He never wanted it (the elections). You see, once you become the leader, attendance in Parliament is a must.



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OTHE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

What will Rekha's next move be? More and more people are now interested in knowing the future of the Rekha phenomenon. At a time when she was recognised as the best actress going in the country she played some wrong cards. Her inconsistent behaviour, her famous tantrums are now costing her very dearly. "What a fantastic actress she is but what is the use of) just being a good actress? In this industry one has to have a heart to think about others, to feel about others and Rekha seems to have lost the power to feel which is very sad," said one director who has worked with her. There are others who think alike. Some who have completed their films with her continue to criticise her. Others who are making films with her continue to criticise her. The rest who are making films with her now, prefer to suffer till they complete their work.

The glow on Shabana Azmı's face has become brighter these days Shabana was always recognised as one of the better actresses of the new generation, but she seems to be at her best now. Her performances in two films released recently Masoom and Avtaar are being raved about. Wrote one critic, "Shabana has again proved that she is the best we have among our actresses and no one can doubt it after seeing her in some of her recent films. Shabana has reached her creative best." Now everyone is talking about Shabana in two other films, waiting for release. There is Mahesh Bhatt's Aarth and there is Shyam Benegal's Mandi.: There are other films like Sweekar Kiya Maine, Kunwari Babu and a film being made by Mrinal Sen. The reason for being at her creative best is supposed to be love. Her "affair" with a leading writer is being talked about but she herself does not want to talk about it.

Big brother B. R. Chopra has emerged as the winner again. At one stage it almost looked like a neck-to-neck contest between him and brother Yash Chopra. B.R is making Mazdoor and Yash is making Mashaal. Dilip Kumar is the hero in both. B.R's was a year-long project and Yash wanted to finish his film in 40 days and release it first. Fate had other things in store. Yash faced one misfortune after another and his film was delayed. What was supposed to be released by March is only half done. And B.R's Mazdoor is ready for release.

Sunny Deol, son of Dharmendra, is the talk of
film circles. He seems to
have come as a silent, surprise packet. His performance in his very first film
Betaab is supposed to be
very good for a newcomer.
His emergence is going to
be a thing that happened
to filmdom, according to
some. Sunny's latest conquest is a film with Nasir
Hussain with Dimple as
the heroine.



Jyothilakshmi: fat is fine

Suppose Silk Smita attains herome status who will substitute her for the vamp roles? This is a question that is being asked quite often in film circles. After much searching it appears that the choice has fallen on Anuiadha. But Silk Smita's ardent fans state that nobody can replace her. According to them others are like cheap imitations: they glitter. Only Silk is the real thing

lot of people have been advising Jyoth. ilakshini to shed some of her excess weight. With Silk Smita around, the competition seems to be hotting up. Silk Smita is by no means a nubile maiden but she is certainly less bulky than Jyothilakshmi. But Jyothilakshmi is undaunted by what her wellwishers and detractors have to say about all that fat. She has so far shown no inclination to go on a diet. She confided to her friend recently that she sees no reason to lose weight because "my audience likes me this way." What ideas, indeed!

When actress Vijaya
Shanthi was given
the role of an Anglo-Indian
girl she took great pains to
study the mannerisms and
peculiarities of a typical
Anglo-Indian. This helped
her to portray the role
realistically. Now she
wants to act as a Muslim
girl.

bout 12 new faces Aappeared on the Tamil cinema horizon in the course of 1982. Most of them have quietly faded out having lasted for only one film. A good many of them have already abandoned all hopes of ever becoming a filmstar and have withdrawn from the arena. Others are still persisting, despite the initial setbacks. Of the newcomers, only Sulakshana appears to have made her presence felt.



57

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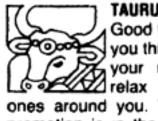
Nutrine Confectionery Company Private Limited, Chittoor, A.P.



ARIES (15 April-14 May) This week is very favour-able for businessmen since most of you may embark on new projects. Chances

are that some of you may inherit propertv. Students will be awarded for their extra-curricular activities, especially in sports, elocution and debating. The end of the week is especially favourable for those in love, any romantic venture is assured of success.

Good dates: 24, 26 and 27. Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 7. Favourable direction: West



TAURUS (15 May-14 June) Good fortune is in store for you this week if you rely on your intuition; a time to ☑ relax with all your near ones around you. Those in service a promotion is in the offing and with it a change of residence. Professionals should look forward to some new opportunities. Those in the army and in the police force will receive honours for bravery.

Good dates: 25, 26 and 27. , Lucky numbers: 1, 4 and 5. Favourable direction: North-west.



GEMINI (15 June-14 July) This is going to be an eventful week. Those in civil services will be hondoured. Students who are

waiting anxiously for their results will come out successfully. This will also be a week full of fun and games. A marriage at home will make life hectic for you. Relations may prove very helpful. For those of you in love, a word of advice: stay away from any kind of romantic ventures.

Good dates: 24, 25 and 26. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 8. Favourable direction: South.



CANCER (15 July-14 Au-(gust) This is not a favourable week so try to postpone deals and matters to a later date. Professionals,

you might be severely criticised by your colleagues. Those in service might face serious opposition. So, you are advised to be circumspect as frankness might bring adverse results. Domestic life too will not be very peaceful thereby adding to your share of problems.

Good dates: 28, 29 and 30. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: East.

LEO (15 August---14 September) This will be a week of peace and prosperity. Businessmen, this is the time to dive into new ven-

tures. Those of you who are employed, a favourable period lies ahead of you- a better job or a promotion may come your way. Those holding influential posts, a trip abroad is forecast. Women are likely to receive presents of jewellery. A letter from far away will bring good news.

Good dates: 24, 28 and 29. Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 6. Favourable direction: North-west



VIRGO (15 September-14 October) A good week for those in love. This is the time when your dreams will be fulfilled, though there

may be a few minor troubles. An excellent period monetarily, but avoid extravagances. For those in service, no unexpected changes are forecast. On the home front things might not be very peaceful: an elderly member might fall seriously ill.

Good dates: 26, 28 and 30. Lucky numbers: 4, 7 and 9. Favourable direction: East.



LIBRA (15 October-14 November) This week there is a fair measure of good fortune in store for you. In the middle of the week you

are likely to meet a benefactor who will be of immense help to you. Businessmen will go on a short journey during the middle of the week: it will prove profitable. Those in police service, this does not seem to be a very favourable week. Domestic life will remain peaceful.

Good dates: 24, 25 and 29. Lucky numbers: 2, 3 and 4. Favourable direction: East.



SCORPIO (15 November—14 December) Your professional and financial fronts will make good progress this week. On the domestic

front, children or a young member of the family will contribute to your happiness. You will stand to benefit through the good offices of a member of the opposite sex. A word of advice: do not squander away your money. Keep it safe for a rainy day or a friend, who might need your help.

Good dates: 26, 27 and 30. Lucky numbers: 6, 8 and 9. Favourable direction: South-east.



SAGITTARIUS (15 December---14 January) Provided you do not grumble over spilt milk and do not take unnecessary risks, the

week has immense opportunities coming your way. Creative artists, especially those in the fields of music, drama and others, success comes your way. At home, things will not be all that peaceful: an elderly member might stand in your way. Try and avoid confrontations.

Good dates: 25, 28 and 29. Lucky numbers: 1, 4 and 7. Favourable direction: South.



CAPRICORN (15 January-14 February) This week proceeds more or less on an even keel. Conserve your energies for business pur-

poses. Those of you who are employed your long-standing promotions will be delayed. This week new friends will come in your life. Cultivate these friendships since one of them might prove very helpful. Those who are still unemployed, this is not a good week for you.

Good dates: 27, 28 and 30. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: South-west.



AQUARIUS (15 February---14 March) This week a marriage will take place in the 10 000 family Almost the whole week will be spent leisurely

with friends and relatives surrounding you. Students, try to concentrate on your studies. Politicians are advised to keep themselves away from any kind of confrontation. Check all your documents before signing. There are chances of a close friendship turning into romance.

Good dates: 24, 25 and 27. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: North.



PISCES (15 March-14 April) A week of slow but steady progress is in store for you. Matters related to property and insurance are well sig-

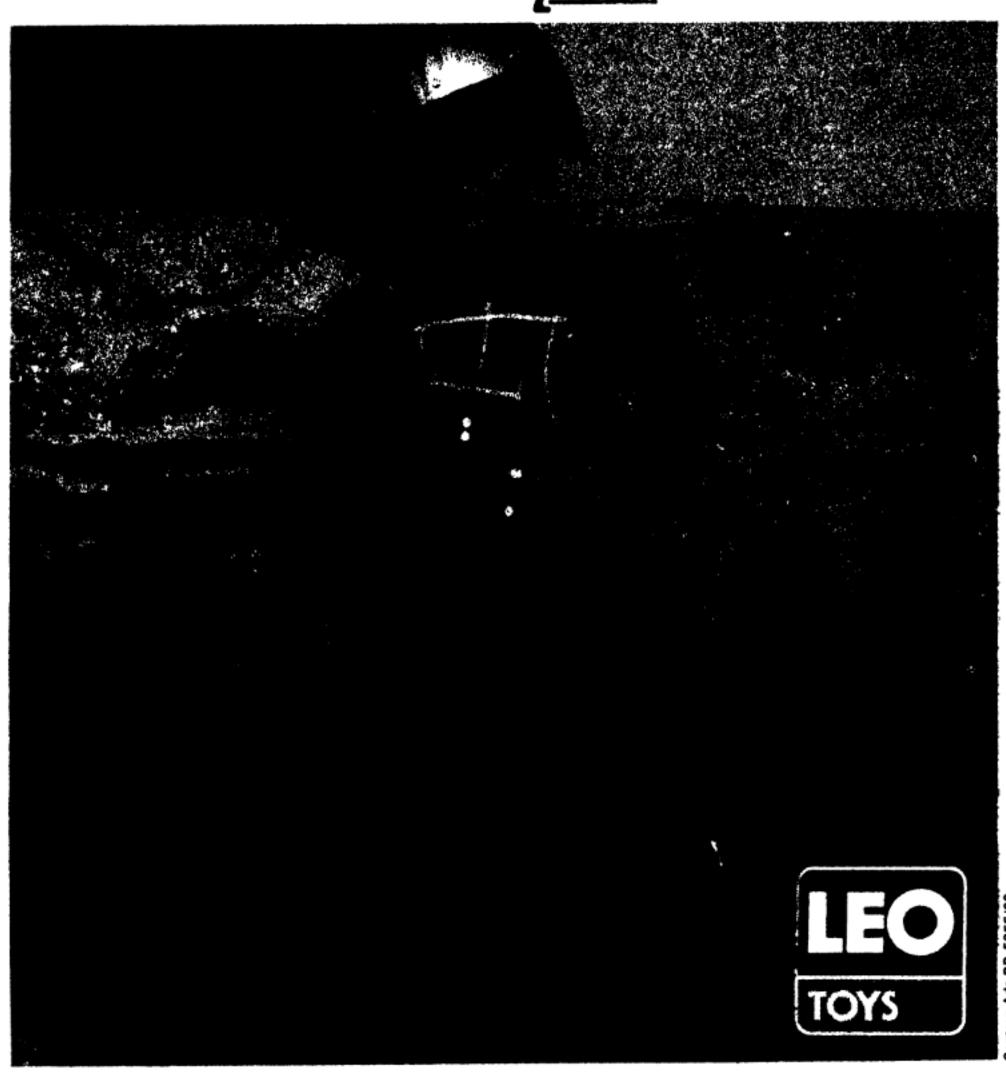
nified. Important changes might take place like shifting of residence, sudden transfer or a promotion. Your hard work will put you in the good books of your seniors. You are advised not to beg, borrow or lend this week as this might cause problems.

Good dates: 26, 27 and 29. Lucky numbers: 4, 7 and 9. Favourable direction: South.

For those born on Thursdays: Those born on Thursdays are usually extremists by nature. If they find themselves in adverse situations, they tend to become cunning, rude and malicious. They develop a hatred towards society in general and human beings in

particular. The reverse is noticed in those born under lucky star signs. They are usually very affectionate and avoid hurting people. They are themselves so haive that they feel hurt occasionally. Women born on Thursdays are usually very loying.

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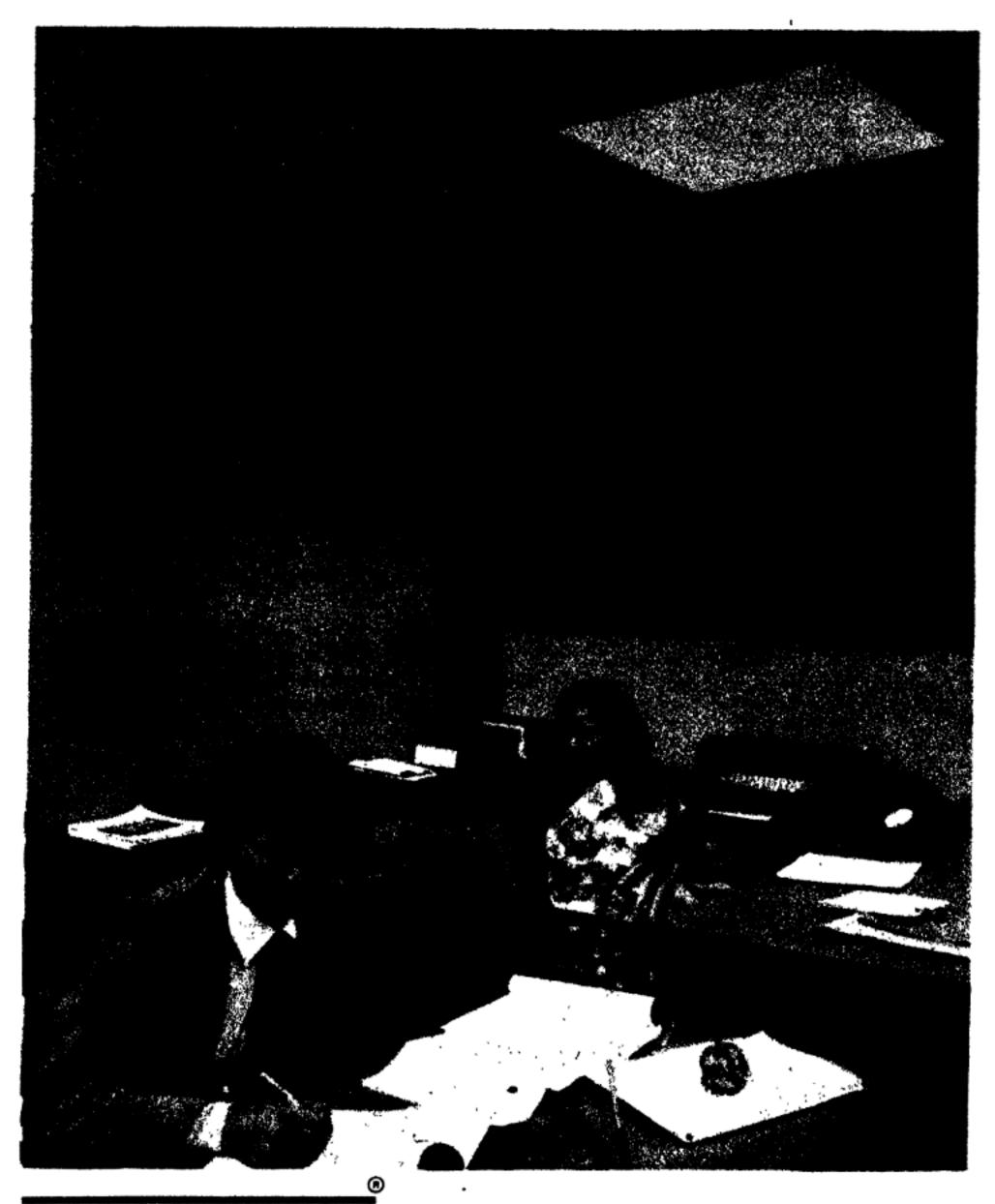
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This India



TRIVANDRUM: A bluff on 23 March that topless tribal girls were dancing outside made a large number of secretariat employees abandon their work to make a beeline to the square outside. They found the tribal girls all right and they were dancing too, but their tops were far from exposed and the audience could hardly notice the contours. But they were far from disappointed for they got a treat of a different kind-a real tribal dance to the accompaniment of the thudi, the kuahai and the chilanka—Indian Express (Ch. Nageshwar Rao, Hyderabad)

BANGALORE: Iddli is usually served with chutney, but have you heard of it being served with a piece of scorpion? A dish of this kind was served at no less a place than the legislature canteen on 23 March 1983 to a customer who was fortunately wide awake enough to detect the venomous insect. It was an iddli embedded with a dash of scorpion. Although the customer did not object, a correspondent of a Kannada newspaper, who was sitting at a nearby table decided to display the sample at the Vidhana Soudha police station—(S. Varadharajan, Bangalore)

HYDERABAD: After much persuasion by Mr M. Omkar, CPI(M) member, in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly, the finance minister, Mr Nadendla Bhaskara Rao, agreed on 17 March to give Rs 1,000 prize money to two claimants in the Ugadi bumper draw of 1981 of the Bhagyalakshmi lottery (conducted by the state government) who produced tickets with identical numbers. The ticket with number AC 619307 and code No 88K was declared eligible for a Rs 1,000 prize, and this was claimed by Mr Veeranjaneyulu of Bangalore and Mrs Anandalakshmi of Hyderabad who produced tickets with the identical numbers. Examination of both tickets by forensic experts revealed that there was no sign of tampering—Hindu (Y. Sivaji, Guntur) TRIVANDRUM: A father and his son are among 500,000 students who sat for the SSLC examinations that began in Kerala on 17 March 1983. The 52-year old father, Mr Pavithran, an ex-soldier, is now an employee of Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Limited (FACT). His son, Sunil Kumar, is appearing for the examination at the proper age of 15. However, they are appearing at two different centres at Puthenpalli village in Ernakulam district—Times of India (Nirmal Samui, Calcutta)

MORADABAD: People gathered in large numbers at the residence of an octroi inspector in Amroha, the other day, when they watched a cabbage dancing. Inspector Nathu Singh had bought a basketful of cabbages for his buffalo. Suddenly one of the cabbages jumped out of the basket and began to whirl round. It later turned out that a one-foot snake happened to sneak into the hollow cabbage and was trying to escape out of it—Northern India Patrika (Rajneesh Batra, Allahabad)

MADRAS: The debate on drought relief and irrigation works was enlivened in the state Assembly on 19 March 1983 when a ruling party member broke into a song (in Tamil) complaining of continued neglect of Tamil Nadu by the centre. Opposition members sprang to their feet on points of order and complained that "valuable time" was being wasted, with the House converted into a music hall. The member, however, had his way and completed the song—Hindu (K. P. Andavan, Gobichettipalayam)

NAGPUR: Work shirking is a common occurrence in government organisations. But a guard in the railways would perhaps bag the first prize if ever a contest were to be held to adjudge the best work shirker. Mr Y. D. Masram, a railway guard posted at Nagpur has rarely boarded a train on official duty during the last four months. But this has not affected his allowances. Mr Masram has very successfully managed to keep away from train duty, and has been drawing all the allowances that accrue to a guard on duty-Hitavada (A. K. Guha, Yeotmal)

NEW DELHI: There is money in garbage. This is the message in the cry, "Kabadiwala," or the linguistic variants of this one hears in almost every Indian city. He pedals the streets, buying old newspapers, magazines, empty liquor bottles, tins, broken pieces of iron and just about anything that can be recycled. Bargaining is the accepted thing in his business. The housewife or the cook has to haggle with the kabadi. Many kabadis shortweigh raddi but the vigilant housewife or servant makes sure that the scales are not tilted—Times of India (K. V. Viswanath, Bangalore)

Without Comment

Where does one start with the struggle to end police atrocities? It suits everyone to attack the policeman on the spot, and, like Pontius Pilate, wash his own hands of all responsibility—George Fernandes in The Illustrated Weekly of India

Mr (Ghani) Khan Choudhury's sights are fixed on Malda, but the Indian Railways is something more than Malda—G.S. Khosla in Statesman

Kerala suffers from the crab culture, where one crab tries to pull down the other—Prem Nazır about his decision to join politics in Indian Express magazine

Indian nationalism is now more positive and assertive in the UK than in India...It is their practical disloyalty to India which is making the Indian immigrants so sour and sharp in their nationalism—Nirad C. Chaudhuri in Times of India



I helped Mrs Gandhi financially during her crisis period—Akbar "Dumpy" Ahmed in Probe

Whenever an organisation becomes weaker, its leader becomes stronger and so is the case with Mrs Indira Gandhi—Maneka Gandhi quoted in Current

If there is a plan in western capitals to support South Africa at all costs, then you in the West are sitting on a volcano—President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia to President Reagan quoted in Hindu

India means to me much more than Pakistan—Salman Rushdie quoted in Bombay

Caroline is quite outspoken and quick, even quick-tempered and I may be a little quick-tempered...I'd say she's more Mediterranean than Albert, who is much closer to his mother, even physically—Prince Rainier of Monaco, commenting on his children in Life



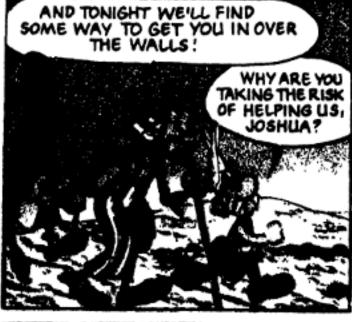














ALL THE HEBREWS







Chess

Velimirovic (Black)



Belyevsky (White) to move

Soviet grandmaster Alexander Belyavsky must be one of the most widely underestimated players in the world. For many years now, indeed ever since winning the Soviet Championship in 1974, he has had

to live in the shadow of such names as Tal, Petrosian, Polugaevsky and Geller without ever really having been demonstrably weaker than his nominal peers. Now at last that he has had the chance to reach the candidates cycle, perhaps the chass world will duly recognise him as one of the foremost chass masters of his day, rather than just another tough Russian grand-master.

Tough though he is, his manner away from the board is as quiet and affable as it is determined and machine-like at the board. A sort of chess-playing Steve Davis. Typical is the following game, in which his telented opponent is comprehensively dispetched by a blend of superior strategical and tactical ability.

White: A. Belyavsky Black: D. Vellmirovic Modern Benoni Defence

Moscow 1982

P-Q4 N-KB3 2 P-Q84 P-K3 N-KB3 P-84 P-05 PxP P-03 P-KN3 P-K4 B-N2 8 B-K2 0-0 10 N-02 P-083 9-0-0 11 P-QR4 QN-Q2 12 P-84 P-85 Considered by theory to be the best. If 13 BxP N-84, then White will be unable to protect his KP e.g. 14 R-K1 N-N5 15 N-83 BxN 16 PxB NxKP

13 K-R1 N-B4 14 P-K5! A powerful liquidating thrust which gives White a clear initiative.

14 ... Pap 15 Pap Rap 16 Nap R-K1

After this natural retreat the pressure on the KB file becomes troublesome. Better would have been the awkward looking 16...R-84.

17 B-NS P-R3 18 B-R4 N(B4)-K5 18 P-Q6 P-KN47

Now a serious error. After 19 . . . NxN 20 PxN B-K3 the position remains unclear, or at least tolerably so.

20 B-R1
Already virtually a winning move. White threatens NeN and B-R5 to which there is no sensible defence as 20 . . . P-QR4 21 N -N5 does not beer thinking about.
20 . . . B-R3 21 Reft Reft

22 8-QRS Bull 23 BuQ BuB
The move upon which Black has been pinning his faint hopes.

DAGRAM

24 P-Q71B-K3 25 Qx8 Resigns After 25 . . . N-NS+ 25 PxN RxQ 27 B-87 R-Q7 28 QA-Q1 the game is up.

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

The performance of the British players at Biarritz was disappointing. Sandra Landy and Sally Horton finished a fine third in the Ladies Pairs, but Britain had only two representatives in the final stages of the Open Pairs. Priday and Rodrigue lay well at one time but had no luck towards the finish and failed to qualify among the last 40 One of their brighter moments occurred in the semi-final round, when South (an opponent) held.

You were going to bid 3NT, but East's Two Diamonds, though clearly he is payunic, poses a small problem. So you temporise with Two Hearts and now West
bids Three Diamonds. You test the market
again with Three Hearts and partner bids.
Three Spades, Rightly or wrongly you bid
Four Spades, which is doubled, and the
hand turns out to be

Dealer West N-S vulnerable

\$ 10 6 3 2

\$ J 10 6 2

\$ J 8 4

\$ 7 5

\$ A J 7 5

\$ N \$ 9 8

\$ A 9 7 2

\$ N \$ \$ 9 7 5 4 3

\$ A 9 7 2

\$ 10 8 6 3

\$ \$ \$ J 4

KQ4 # AKQ # Q3 # AKQ92

Losing 500 was not a success for North-South.

The technique of conducting even a weekend tournament for a large number of players is well understood in Britain. You hold a series of events, and when a team goes home to tell the locals that it has finished runner up in the .Coupe Monte Carlo, or whatever, no one knows that this event contained only the third-stage remnants. At Biarritz everyone not in the final of the teams was involved in a gigantic and endless Swiss event, of which only the winners had the faintest chance of gaining any recognition.

TERENCE REESE

- Is the International Court of Justice at the Hague an organ of the UNO?
- 2. In gambling terminology, what is a fruit machine?
- 3. The Florschach Test is named after a Swiss psychoanalyst. Why is he so well-known?
- 4. What does an electronic flash contain?
- 5. Where would you find the cerebrospinel fluid?
- 6. Homoeopethy has a motto. What is it?
- Panderpost is the name of a disease.Who are affected by it?
- 8. When did the Mau-Mau uprising occur?

Stamp



The current Irish definitive stamps, which feature animal motifs from old Celtic manuscripts, are

being replaced by a new series illustrating the theme 'Irish architecture through the ages'. The 44p stamp has a view of Killarney cathedral. This was begun in 1842 to the design of Augustus Pugin, the English pioneer of neo-Gothic, but work was interrupted for four years by the Famine and the cathedral was not completed until 1855



This new 300-lire stamp from San Marino costs 400 lire to buy over the post office counter. The entre 100 lire represents a charitable donation to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for work among the world's homeless, now estimated to number 12 millions. Earlier charity stamps of similar type are described in The Guinness Book of Stamps Fects and Feats, by James Machay (Guinness Superlatives, 226 pp. £8.95).

C. W. HILL

a highly contagious disease. 8. Between 1953 and 1957 in Kenya.

means "Life cures line."

7. Cattle, Pinderpest or Cattle Plague is

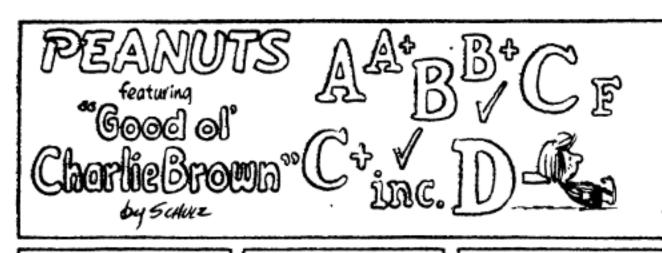
5. In the brain.
6. Similia Similibus Curantur and 4

4. A glass tube containing ment gas 4. A glass tube containing ment gas used as a light source in photography.

3. Hermann Rorachach devised the test so named after him in which subjects fook at a series of ten symmetrical inditions and describe what they see what they see the foundation and describe what they see the foundation at the deduction of the

S. A slot machine in Britain.

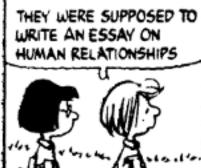
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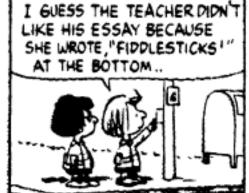




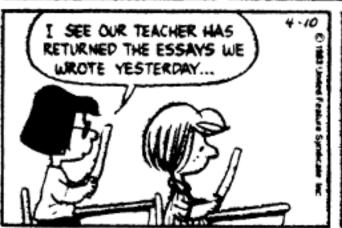
MY DAD SAID THAT HE'S NEVER FORGOTTEN SOMETHING A TEACHER ONCE WROTE ON ONE OF HIS PAPERS ...

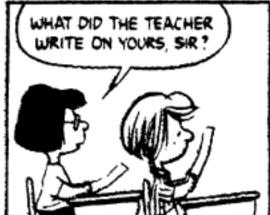










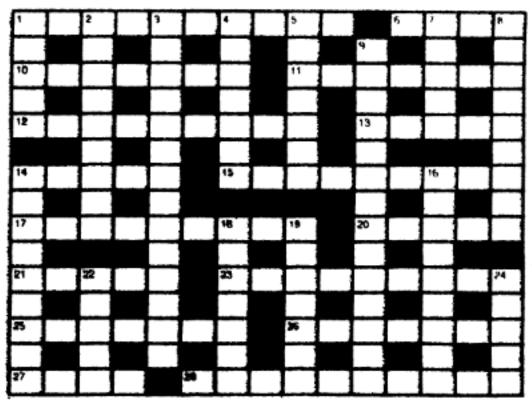






Sunday crossword

No. 1



- Professional demanded? Announced, rather. (10)
- 6. Drab retreat to produce the one of Avon. (4)
- 10. Quality of hope in the human breast (7)
- 11. Lit toes clumpily, and draws out. (7)
- 12. Actor Howard returns to most fermer thespien, initially. How outgoing! (9)
- 13. But this passageway is not in the main area. (5)

- 14 The dissolute person met 500, and thrust through (5)
- 15 Spare chap, possibly? Rubbish! (5-4)
- 17 Sounds crippling to be conciliatory (9) 20 Pinter loses his head, in order to bury (5)
- 21 Obey direction, unfortunately, to turn black (5)
- 23 Melt us 'ere confusion! They drive stubborn creatures (9)
- 25 A more palatable concoction of tarts that is (7)
- 26 Cast pie, roughly-preventing decay, at any rate (7)
- 27 Foothardy breakout? (4)
- 28 Set it up, lad reconstruct for truisms (10)

- 1 Portion sounds anti-war (5)
- 2 Catches up with-or seizes too much? (9)
- 3 Ride one forry and chaos! Get the tune? (11.3)
- 4 Line entangled with 11thy ships-trouble and ailment (7)
- s though it w
 - 7. A young lady? Something's wrong (5)
 - 8 Does this paint improve one's mood? (9)
 - 9 Dissolve an engagement, sounds like What a dashing of one's hopes
- 14 Communist apistle or a date of importance? 1.6)
- 16 Pleaded to cut down northern date tree (9)
- 18 Mom, kar? Nonsense, that's not good. (7) 19. Ohivatrous man of fashion (7)
- 22 Nothing, one in a donkey-strange, some n
- 24 Adherents of principles sound like gender!
- haven1 (5)

Answers Next week

Compiled by Rita Towari

COLOUR CONSCIOUS





Mrs Gandhi and Maneka Gandhi: common tastes?

DESPITE their estrangement and the unceremonious manner in which Maneka Gandhi had to leave 1. Safdarjang Road last year, Mrs Indira Gandhi and her daughter-inlaw appear to be maintaining some peculiar kind of connection. By some coincidence, the colour of the sarees these two ladies wear on important occasions are almost always the same. When Mrs Indira Gandhi took over as the chairperson of the Non-Aligned Meet (NAM), she wore a light green boidered saree. (Incidentally, the colour combination of the flower arrangement in front of the VIP

seat in Vigyan Bhavan on the inaugural day of the summit matched the colours of the Prime Minister's clothes) When Mrs Maneka Gandhi launched her new political party, Rashtriya Sanjay Manch (RSM). she wore a saree with similar colours. Even in Lucknow a year ago Maneka Gandhi wore a similar saree, which had the same colour combination Apparently the lessons which Mrs Maneka Gandhi learnt at her mother-in-law's house have not been forgotten. Or, is it because both Mrs Maneka Gandhi and Mrs Indira Gandhi share the same astrologer?

VIDEO GAMES

A state government-owned electronics firm has taken the best possible advantage of the Non-Aligned Summit. An application of this firm to immediately import professional video recorders for the Doordarshan had initially been turned down by the department of electronics (DoE) because the draft memorandum of understanding between the Indian firm and a leading Japanese firm envisaged direct sales and no technology transfer. In the last week of February, a senior officer of the DoE, who is better known for his father's powerful connections, went with the representatives of the firms to the deputy minister for electronics, Dr M.S. Sanjeevi Rao, and argued that as the equipment was required for the NAM, the import clearance be granted. The minister gave his consent. The same day, thanks to the clout of this officer, the file was initialled by Mr Shivraj Patil, the minister of state for electronics as well and sent to the ministry of industries as foreign exchange was

involved and the clearance from the projects approval board was needed. The same day, Mr S. M. Ghosh, secretary (industrial development) and the industry minister, Mr N.D. Tiwari, also cleared the file. But despite this superfast movement of the file, the equipment did not come for the NAM. But as the approval is there, in violation of normal rules of the government, this state governmentowned firm is going ahead with the import, which in the first phase, would involve foreign exchange to the tune of Rs 1.7 crores. The Doordarshan authorities have released departmental foreign exchange for the purpose. What is most intriguing is that the deal with the Japanese firm was clinched when this all-powerful officer from the DoE went to Japan last year on a "private visit." However, because of the clout which this officer's family enjoys with the powers that be, any enquiry into this episode certainly is ruled out, as is inevitably the case.

CANAL OF WOE

INSTEAD of bringing relief to the areas through which it flows, a major irrigation canal in Uttar Pradesh has wrought havoc in the districts of Lakhimpur Kheri, Sitapur, Unnao, Hardoi, Lucknow, Barabanki, Rae Bareli and Faizabad. The Sharda Sahayak Canal, which is almost a mini-river flowing between two major rivers of the state, the Gomti and the Ganges, was built in the mid-Seventies. It starts near the Nepal border in Lakhimpur Kheri and flows down right up to Varanasi district. The mud banks of the canal have caused seepage problems. As a result, for stretches of up to one kilometre on either side of the canal, there is perpetual waterlogging. This has been the position for months together now. The crops in these areas have been destroyed and agricultural activity has been badly affected In many places, the mud houses of the villagers have been damaged. No major politician of the state has taken up the plight of these people seriously so far, with the exception of Mr Ram Lal Rahi. an MP from Mr H. N. Bahuguna's Democratic Socialist Party. Last month, along with thousands of villagers, he organised a unique protest: a dharna in the waterlogged areas. For 24 hours Mr Rahi and his followers sat in the waterlogged fields to draw the state government's attention to the problem.

DASMUNSHI FOR RAJYA SABHA?

THE entry of Mr Priyaranjan Dasmunshi into the Congress(I) has posed a few problems to the finance minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee. In 1984, the Congress(I) is going to elect one member to the Rajya Sabha from West Bengal. Because it was not in a similar position in 1980, Mr Mukherjee had to seek election to the Rajya Sabha by shifting his place of residence to Gujarat. According to sources close to the minister, he had plans of seeking election from West Bengal in 1984, so that his "vanbas (banishment)" to Gujarat could be ended. But with Mr Dasmunshi in the party, there could be a possibility of the Congress(I) deciding to have his powerful presence in the Rajya Sabha. While every section of the West Bengal Congress(I) has overtly welcomed Mr Dasmunshi's entry, few people are finding their dreams on the verge of being shattered. D.E. NIZAMUDDIN

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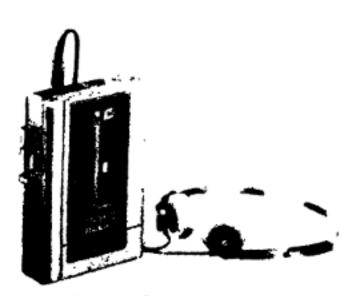
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I must have looked an electrifying sight - and a photographer snapped my picture

The modern art of Tingling.

ast week, I spent a few days with my spinster Grand Aunt.

Promptly she chalked out a tight programme for me. And first on the list was a visit to the art gallery!

The gallery was huge. Grand Aunt led the way and barrelled a path through the crowd.

A blank white canvas with three blue dots caught her attention

"Look at this," she whispered to me in awe.

I looked at it. Three blue dots in a neat row. The title said 3 Dots. I counted them Three. WOW!

I heard a soft voice behind me say distinctly "Three Dots". I looked over my shoulder and— POW!

A stunning young thing stood very close behind me.

She seemed fascinated with that crazy canvas. I coughed politely and said "Dotty, isn't it?"

"Huh," she came back to earth and froze me with a look.

Hastily I looked away.
Grand Aunt pushed on and I followed her, sneaking a look behind me.

The girl was scribbling away in a notebook

Boy, she had class.

She was coming towards us!

I lit a cigarette and decided to play the art lover. I stared hard at the next exhibit—a piece of sculpture

I let my jaw drop in open admiration, cocked my head a little to the left for a different perspective Full of knowledge, I moved on, tapping ash into an ashtray nearby.

Suddenly, a commotion broke out behind me. I turned to see two gallery attendants gently wiping out the ash I'd flicked. Oops! How was I to know it was part of the exhibition.

From the corner of my eye I noticed the girl laughing into her handkerchief.

I was frowning at a little earthen pot, when I heard a musical voice behind me:

"Enjoying yourself?" she asked.
"Mmm. Terrific stuff this art,

isn't it?"

Then, leaning close towards me, she said, "I know of a real work of art. Interested?" My heart bounced around wildly. "Sure" I replied.

"It's an art. It's called Tingling." Her eyes were limpid pools.

I choked. "Tingling. But I never heard..."

"Your education is incomplete," she said, "Come."

I walked in a daze behind her.

At a nearby cafe, she bought two bottles. Tinglers!

Slowly, she opened them and handing me one, said "Take a small sip."

I sipped gently.

"Don't swallow! Roll your tongue around "I rolled my tongue around Ocooh, it was chilled!

"Can you feel it? Huh. Can you feel the Tingle?"

Suddenly, it hit me.

A million tiny bubbles popped against my palate and a crazy sensation spread and began to electrify me.

In sheer excitement I burst out:"I'M TINGLING!"

I must have looked an electrifying sight tingling all over—and a photographer snapped my picture.

I go often to the art gallery. Quite good I am too, at understanding the difference between ashtrays and sculptures.



And whenever I get a bit bored, I whisper to Veena (that's her name) that it was time we Tingled.

And her eyes turn to limpid pools again.

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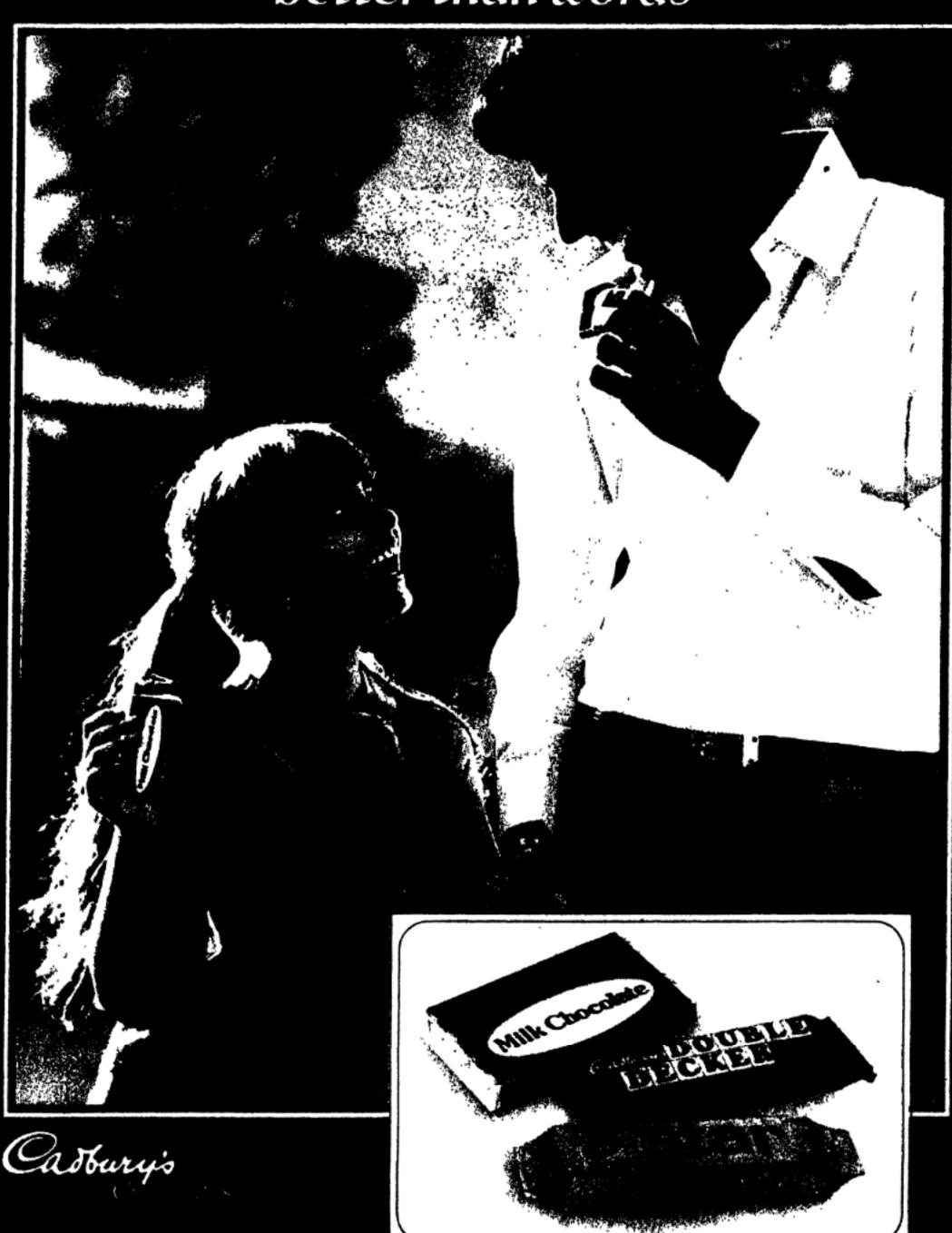
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Sometimes, Cadbury's can say it better than words





A year after he seized power in Dhaka in a bloodless coup, Gen. Ershad is faced with a problem which every military ruler has to reckon with: to gain legitimacy for his government, through a popular mandate, without losing either power or face. And he has set himself to this task by lifting some restrictions on political activities in the country which he had imposed soon after taking over the reins of the country. M.J. Akbar flew down to Dhaka to find out about the general's plans. The interview that followed gives an insight into the mind of the Chief Martial Law Administrator of Bangladesh: his problems and his plans for the future.

Page 16

For five blazing years it never rained in Solankiya Tala, a village in the Jodhpur district of Rajasthan. The land is parched and man and animal fight for the last drops of water. Due to the severe drought about 100 starvation deaths have occurred but the state government, in a desperate bid to hide the truth, has brushed it off as "59 deaths due to a mystery illness." A firsthand report by Seema Mustafa.

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No solutions to the problems of the two most troubled states in the country—Assam and Punjab—seem to be in sight. Pran Chopra says that complacence, compounded by the blunders New Delhi had made earlier, has only aggravated the tragedies of these two states. Plus, an on-the-spot report by Indranil Banerjie on the recent spate of violence in the Goalpara district of Assam.

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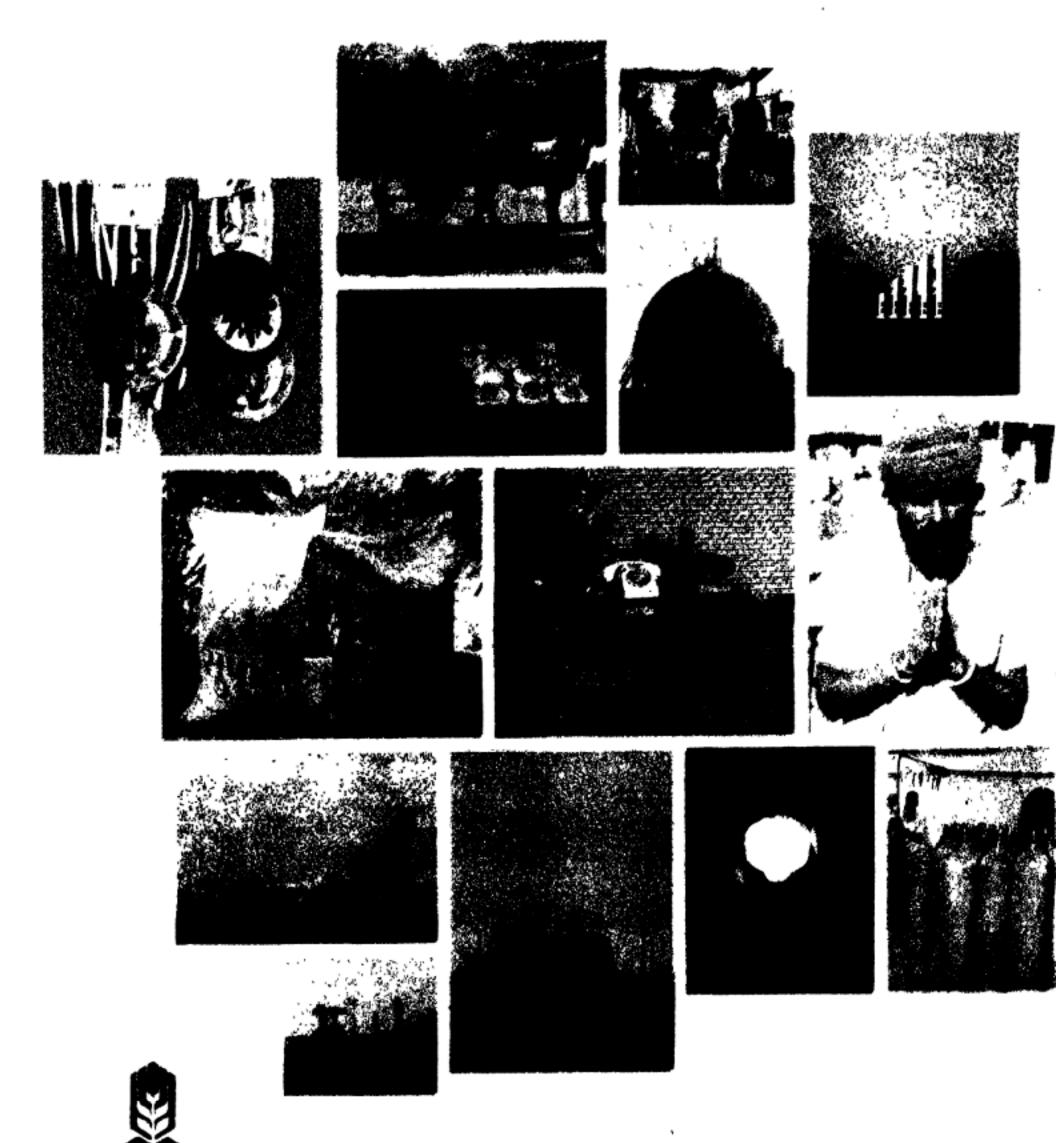
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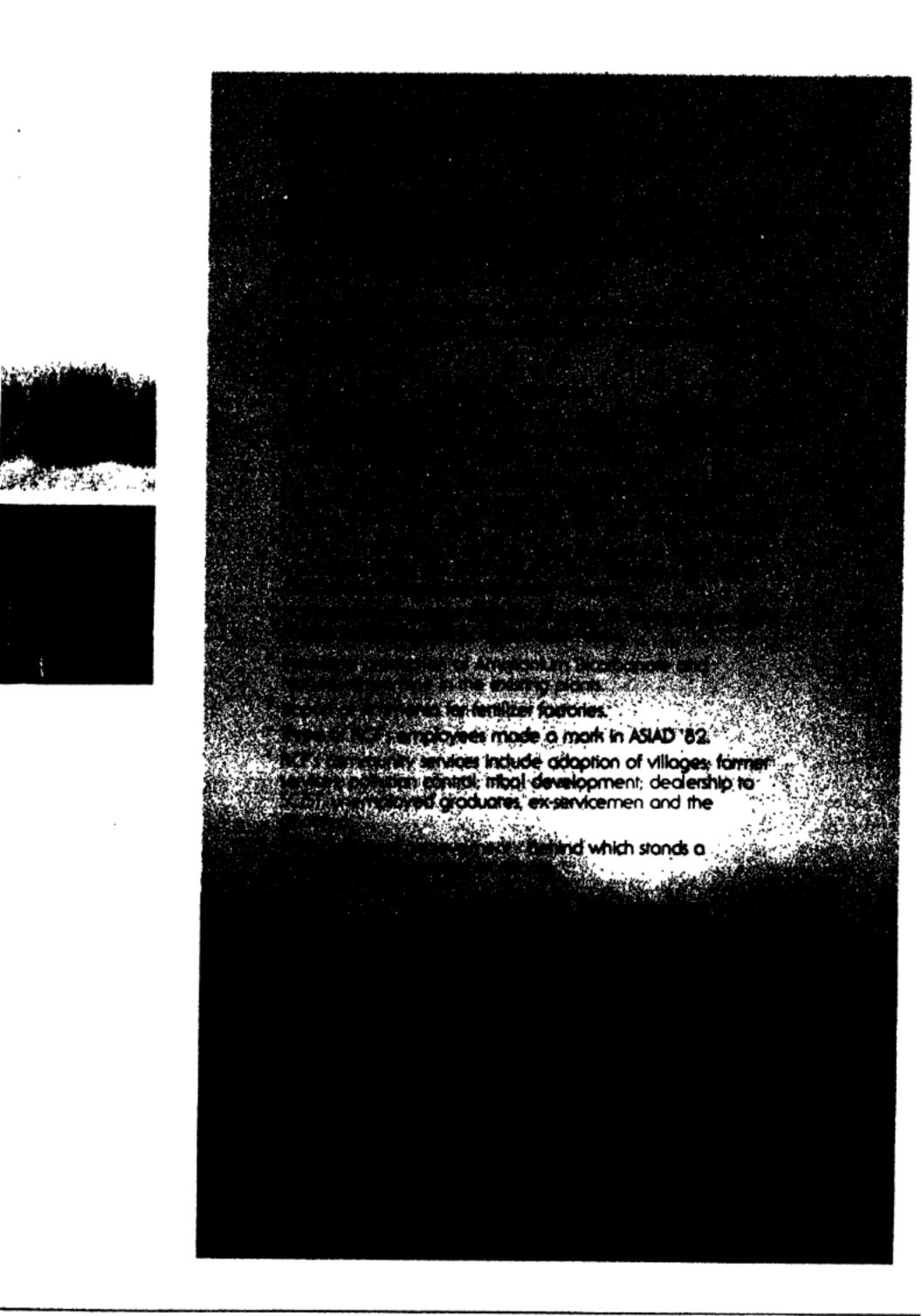
Not a photogallery, but a biography



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Putting the clock back

here are two sides to President General Zia-ul Haq's personality. When you meet him, he is all charm and courtesy. For a politician, he speaks with refreshing candour and gives the impression of one talking on the level. You come away feeling that he is a man who means what he says and has none of the clever-by-half deviousness of Bhutto. And though somewhat of a bigot, he is also forward looking.

What the President-General does is an altogether different matter. He didn't look to me to be the kind of man who would hang his benefactor. He did; and that on the divided verdict of a court with a majority of one for the hanging. As head of state he could have exercised his prerogative of pardon and commuted the death sentence to one of life-imprisonment. When Iasked him why he had not done so, he replied: "Only Allah can pardon a criminal." It was apparent that though great pains were taken to give Bhutto's trial a facade of fairness, Zia had made up his mind to hang him the day he grabbed power

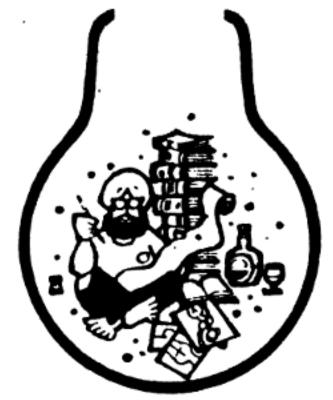
Zia does not look nor talk like a man who would sanction chopping off of hands of thieves and having women (but not men) caught in adultery stoned to death. When I asked him about this, he was equally categorical: "We will observe the Shariat law to the letter. We are an

Islamic republic."

I asked him about women having to veil themselves. He did not think that purdah was obligatory in Islam. All that was required of them by the holy law was to be "modestly dressed;" for the rest "Sharam and Hayaa (there are no exact equivalents of these words in English) were in the eyes of the beholder." Nevertheless he forbade Pakistani women athletes competing in the seventh Asiad even though they agreed to appear in salwar-kameez.

Yet another law now to be enforced is designed to stamp out prostitution which flourishes in all Pakistani cities, as it does in ours. However, in Pakistan dire penalties are to be imposed on the unfortunate prostitutes and only mild ones on their patrons. This despite the knowledge that most women who turn to prostitution are forced into the profession by poverty and not of their own free will. Nevertheless, the "law" prescribes that a prostitute will be hanged or stoned to death; her patron will get away with flogging or a few months in jail. What kind of justice is this?

The current issue of The Economist of London reports that last



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

November in Karachi a new-born child was stoned to death by a mob led by a mulla on the presumption that he was illegitimate. The police were present but did not prevent this ghastly act of infanticide nor arrest anyone. What crime had the innocent babe committed?

I am sure if I were to question President-General Zia or his ambassador in India, they would tell me to mind my own business. How far can the state go on denying elementary human rights to its citizens on the plea that it is its internal affair? Should we Indians keep our mouths shut about whatever happens in Pakistan? I don't think so particularly when the majority of Pakistanis (their women plus their innumerable male supporters) feel that norms of elementary justice are being grossly abused. This is something that should not be left to Amnesty International or appeals by emigre Pakistanis to The Human Rights Commission; it is incumbent upon us as neighbours and first cousins to raise our voices in pro-

Lying about sex

Why are some men prone to he and boast about their sexual exploits? Havelock Ellis wrote of his marathon performances in bed when most of his friends knew he was impotent. Our own (and Pakistan's) Josh Malihabadi in his autobiography Yaadon ki Baraat would have us believe that no woman from 16 to 60, virgin, wife, divorcee or widow could resist him. Nor could young boys when the poet's fancy turned to pederasty. Now we have the French novelist, Georges Simenon, claiming to have laid over

10,000 women. He gives the lurid details of his sex life in an autobiographical series of which he has so far published 22 in 11 years. He is 80 and apparently still hammering away on his typewriter and his women.

Simenon is a freak. He started life as a journalist but discovered that there was more money in books. With demoniac energy he set about churning out stuff at the rate of a chapter a day, a novel a week, totalling a minimum of 20 books a year. At the age of 28 he created a character, Maigret, the. French counterpart of Father Brown and Sherlock Holmes, a kindly, cunning detective and flooded the world with Maigret serials. Money cascaded in like the Niagara falls. With money came women. He had married young. He fled France when partisans threatened to kill him as a collaborator, divorced his first wife to marry another; then he returned to Europe to resume relationship with the first while continuing with the second and added a mistress to make a *menage a quatre*. The three women could not put the fire out of his groins; so at the end of every working day he found himself a whore to quench it. He exposed all his amours in great detail to the press and in his autobiographies. His daughter could not take it and ended her life with her own hands.

Simenon is as compulsive a liar as he was a fornicator. What drove him to these excesses in writing and womanising is explained in a recently published biography by Fenton Bresler Writing created wind in Simenon's belly; when he failed to expel it from the right orifice he threw up. About his countless affairs-quickies, (love is only another four letter word in Simenon's lexicon)--Bresler opines that he lives in a world of fantasy, lies all the time and in due course comes to believe that they were true.

The timeless Indian

If time is the art of the Swiss, timelessness is the art of the Indian. In the past I tried to analyse our 'indifference to the passage of time as derivative of our philosophic belief that we conceived it as circuiar and without a beginning or an end. This has not too deeply embedded in our psyche to be uprooted. Our yesterdays and tomorrows remain eternally the same kal. I came across a charming variation of the theme recently. A friend who had urgent business elsewhere but wanted me to await his return said, "Please wait for me for two minutes, I'll be back in an hour."

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Dr Jagjit Singh Chauhan had met Mrs Gandhi in 1977

r Jagut Singh Chauhan keeps popping in and out of the news For most Indians he is a shadowy figure Even in Punjab, where he was finance minister in the Akalı coalition till 1969, not many know much about him. He is one of the handful of extremist Akalıs who lett tor the UK in 1971. And he would well 'tave been torgotten had he not, during his stav abroad, first in the UK and then in Canada and the USA, started a campaign for a "Sovereign Sikh state of Khalistan."

Soon after he reached the UK. Dr Chauhan raised the demand for "Khalistan" for the first time in a press interview in September 1971 which was notable for wild and ridiculous allegations of oppression of Sikhs in India. To incite Sikhs abroad, he said that gurdwaras in India were being razed to the

ground. Dr Chauhan returned to India in July 1977, after the installation of the Akali-Janata government in Punjab, and tried to rehabilitate himself in Sikh politics. He said that he would work under the leadership of Mr Prakash Singh Badal. then chief minister, but the Akali leadership had no place for him. However, the Punjab Congress, then in the wilderness, made contacts with him. Mr Zail Singh, now President, met him many a time during that period. Those were the days when Sanjay Gandhi and Mr Zail Singh were forming the Dal Khalsa to fight the Akalis. Dr Chauhan also spent long hours with the Shahi linam of the Jama Masjid in Delhi to forge an alliance between Sikhs and Muslims.

Dr Chauhan met Mrs Gandhi more than once at that time. Soon after her return to power, he met her again. He was ambitious and what he was looking for was political power Finding that neither the Akalis, then out of power, nor the Congress(I), then in power, was interested in his overtures, he hoisted in March 1980 the "national flag" of Khalistan in the presence of a handful of his supporters at Anandpur Sahib (Punjab), the place where the Akalis had in 1973 asked the central government to hand over to Punjab subjects other than those of defence, foreign affairs, communication and curtency.

Even the extremist stand of Dr Chauhan failed to elicit support. And in May 1980 he left for the UK again. In his absence, Mr Balbir Singh of Taran Taran, Amritsar, announced on 16 June 1980, at Amritsar the formation of Khalistan, a sovereign Sikh state with Dr Chauhan as its president. Mr Balbir Singh styled himself secretary-general of the National Council of Khalistan.

The central government, which had been intercepting telephonic talks of some persons in the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) with "certain people" in London during the Akali agitation, knew much of what was being planned by various groups and individuals, much more than what was noted on a "paper" prepared then: "The "SGPC adopted a resolution (29 March 1981) describing Sikhs as a separate nation. The

There is a suspicion in official quarters that Dr Chauhan is being liberally funded by foreign agencies. He is known to have had contacts with Gen. Danier Graham, co-chairman of a private organisation called the American Security Council

Akali Dal (Talwandi group) in its World Sikh convention held on 13 April, 1981, at Anandpur Sahib adopted a resolution calling for honourable survival of Sikhs with dignified status, rebuilding 'Desh Punjab' within the Indian Union and urging that the Sikh nation should immediately approach the UNO for enrolment as an associate member."

Dr Chauhan does not appear to have any ostensible means of income. But he is never short of money. He has been able to sustain his agitation for Khalistan and has, in the process, been touring a number of countries in Europe and America. He had also visited Pakistan at least twice to espouse the cause. He has also been sending money to India through his relatives and close associates returning to the country from abroad. Most of the funds appear to have reached the country through illegal channels from the UK.

The government is also aware that small donations are being collected by the lieutenants of Dr Chauhan. Apart from this they are charging a fee for issuing so-called "refugee certificates" to those seeking "asylum" in Canada. Some collections were also reportedly made through the sale of "Khalistan stamps" which were smuggled into the country from Canada. A number of such stamps had reportedly been sold during November 1980 on the occasion of Guru Nanak's birthday celebrations.

There is suspicion in official quarters that Dr Chauhan is being liberally funded by foreign agencies. He is known to have had contacts with Gen. Danier Graham. co-chairman of a private organisation called the American Security Council and formerly chief of the defence intelligence agency of the US. Gen. Graham was reported to have arranged a meeting between Dr Chauhan and Mr Agha Shahi, then Pakistan's foreign minister. Dr Chauhan has also been maintaining contacts with Senator Mark Hatfield, Senator Jesse Helms and Senator Sam Nunn. He also claimed to have met Alexander Haig, the former secretary of state and Charles Percy of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

That he has been able to influence many Sikhs abroad, however little the support he has at home, is evident. A US gurdwara has withdrawn an invitation issued to the Indian ambassador, Mr K. R. Narayanan, in protest against the attitude of the Indian government toward the Sikh community. Dr Chauhan and his supporters had much to do with this.

From a shadowy figure he is trying to be a sinister figure as well for most Indians.



Motivated?

The cover story, Rise of communalism (3 April), was superb. It is indeed tragic that we devote so much of our time and energies on that senseless campaign of hate and violence. Had our efforts been better channelised and our priorities clear, India would have been better placed in the community of nations. I hope that the high caste Hindu fanatics and political leaders of our country will realise the futility of spreading the communal virus.

H G. Mahaldar, Bijapur

I wish to thank SUNDAY for commissioning a team of writers to analyse the growing incidence of communal violence in India and to suggest remedies in this connection.

Are we to believe the government is not capable of checking communal riots? Cannot the government, which is trying to ensure global peace by hosting conferences like the NAM, restore peace within its own country? How can this government, which condemned the genocide in Kampuchea and Lebanon, turn a blind eye to the butchery in its own country? There is only one answer to all these questions: Those who are in the seat of power, wish to remain there, and they can only remain in power by organising the murder of the helpless minorities (Assam bears testimony to this).

Tarique Mahmood, Jamshedpur

I read the cover story with great interest. Yes, it is true that none other than our politicians are responsible for communal riots. In this context it would be pertinent to mention that ours is hardly a secular country, despite all appearances to the contrary. If we were truly secular in our outlook we would not have accorded special privileges to any particular community, be it minority or majority. As long as the Muslims and Hindus are not treated alike, communal tension will continue. All Indians, regardless of their faith, should be ruled by a common civil law.

Param Hans Singh, Arrah (Bihar)

I personally feel that communal hatred is the result of our eating habits. Vegetarians dislike non-vegetarians, some non-vegetarians dislike beefeaters, most beef-eaters dislike porkeaters, and so on. When will human beings learn to co-exist happily? C. N. Swamy, Madras

The cover story was revealing. Being an Indian and a Muslim at that, I have been following the frequent reports of communal violence with great interest. I have come to the conclusion that the majority community always tries to rule the minorities on a communal basis. The elements opposed to their designs are conveniently bumped off: the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi is case in question.

The majority community in our country claims to be the custodian of truth and non-violence. And being the custodian of non-violence, this community cannot tolerate cow slaughter. But what happens when human beings are staughtered in this country? As for the RSS, it is only interested in a Hindu rashtra based on the concept of varunashrama dharma. The victims of the RSS are not the Muslims alone; the harijans too have no place in a rashtra which is based on varunashrama.

What, therefore, is the solution? I firmly believe that all those who are truly secular in their outlook should take up the cause of secularism in this country. Secondly, the government should keep a tab on the communal organisations that are functioning at the grassroots' level. Finally, the police should make every effort to discharge their duties with sincerity; they should not allow themselves to be influenced by communal prejudices.

Mehaboob Ali Balganur, Dharwar (Kar nataka)

My sincere thanks to Sunday for a highly effective analysis of a burning issue. Once again, a team of journalists proved to be far more aware and alert than our political leaders.

Devi Prasad Shaw, Barakar (West Bengal)

A superb cover story. Waqar Ahmed, Rohatas

The government should make every effort to rescue the innocent people from the clutches of communalists. Pradip Deb Roy, Jamshedpur

The focus on communalism was both timely and informative. However, the contents reflected a distinct anti-Hindu bias which could warrant a tremendous Hindu backlash. Let Sunday not be branded as communal. Sidharth Prasad, Lucknow

Thanks to Sunday for the scribblings. The cover story was a good time-killer. Has Sunday been reduced to a mouth-piece of Islam? Are the Hindus the only trouble-makers? And the BJP and RSS the only outlaws? Isn't Sunday ashamed of such vulgar journalism? Subramoni S. Iyer, Trivandrum

The various articles that comprised the cover story gave me the impression that Hindus are mainly responsible for communal riots in India. This is not true. The statistics on pages 29 and 44 proved that riots occur in areas where Muslims have a sizeable population.

While appreciating Udayan Sharma's Making Muslims Hindus, I wish to mention that two other reports on the same lines would have made interesting reading. These two could have been entitled 'Making Hindus Muslims' and 'Making Hindus Christians.' In this connection, I can only repeat what a Sunday columnist said last year: Why worry about conversions in a secular country?

V. Sagar, New Delhi

If one goes by the old saying that the pen is mightier than the sword, then Sunday has done more harm than those thousands of RSS volunteers have managed to do so far. The cover story was more provocative than informative. The role of Sunday in promoting communalism is commendable. Ramanand Sharma, Bangalore

The cover story was distinctly anti-Hindu. It gave the impression that secularism demands the destruction of Hinduism by the communists, capitalists, Christians and Muslims; that the Hindus have no right to defend themselves; that if they defend themselves they are *ipso facto* being communal; that, in fact, the systematic annihilation of Hinduism should be viewed as a secular deed.

India may have become a state for all practical purposes, but it has yet to become a nation. And this is because of the four categories of anti-Hindu, ex-Hindus who continue to play the role of the dog in the manger. In the first category are the Indian Muslims who feel and act as Muslims; in the second category are the Indian Christians who behave no differently; the third are the Indian communists, who, like the Indian capitalists in the fourth category, are obsessed with their own principles and values. So where are the Indians? The Hindus alone are the true Indians. B. S. Sanyal, Varanasi

How can the Muslims hope to live in peace when to them the propagation of any other religion implies a dishonour to Islam? As for communalism, it is not restricted to India alone. All over the world communalism has raised its head. The BJP and RSS are not the only trouble-makers; their elimination therefore, is no solution whatsoever. Chittaranjan Bhattacharjee, Calcutta

Outrageous Gossip

While congratulating Khushwant Singh for his cover story contribution in the 3 April Issue (How to lance the communal virus, I cannot help expressing my disappointment with his Gossip sweet and sour column. I cannot understand how a man of his calibre and reputation can spare time to write about the petty and unimportant Feroze Varuna Gandhi.

My sympathies are certainly with the three-year-old son of the widow, Maneka Gandhi; but I cannot forget the fact that the person Khushwant Singh chose to discuss at length belongs to a family which has ruled us for almost 30 long years. There are so many children in this country who are not as privileged as Feroze Varuna; many of them are orphans, but perhaps some among them are more gifted than the grandson of the Prime Minister. Why can't they be discussed at length?

It is abundantly clear that the nation is passing through a critical stage. Perhaps Mr Singh could have used his column to write about the poor and discriminated sections of our society. It is unfortunate that he has chosen to function as a hired journalist.

Z. K. Farzan, New Delhi

While culogising Feroze Varuna Gandhi, Mr Singh got carried away. The three-year-old is Maneka's son. So what? I would like to remind Mr Singh that there are thousands of children in this country who also deserve atten-

The fourth

This has reference to Ram Rajya in the south (Looking Glass, 20 February). It was mentioned that three 'Rama(s)' are now ruling in the south. I wish to draw attention to the fourth 'Rama'—Pondicherry chief minister D. Ramachandran.

T. V. S. S. N. Sastry, Madras

Spare us

I was shocked to find Phoolan Devi's face on the cover of SUNDAY (A queen goes to jail, 27 February). I don't know how long these 'heroes of our times' will continue to feature on the cover of a national weekly.

S. Tufail Hasan, Aligarh

Mischievous?

This has reference to Anita Pratap's report, Liquor deaths: Murdering for money (19 September 1982) wherein it was stated: "Contractors are also blacklisted for arrears, as was Isaac Peter, the akbari contractor of Ernakulam range. He is alleged to have outstanding arrears of Rs 85 lakhs. The case is likely to be written off because he has declared himself insolvent."

The above report was mischievous and false in every detail. I am not blacklisted by the government. Nor have I declared myself insolvent. I have no arrears of Rs 85 lakhs.

Issac Peter, Cochin

tion. And there are thousands of other Indians who, given a chance, would have outdone Sanjay Gandhi.

H. M. Sinha, Imphal

Just God? revealed Mr Singh's scepticism. He has not been fortunate enough to know the truth; he has not been able to comprehend those elements which do not manifest conclusive evidence. Ignorance, indeed, is the mother of impudence.

Sankar Sen, Calcutta

Mr Singh cut a very sorry figure with his item on God. He refused to buy the theory that we pay for the sins committed during our lifetime. He also ruled out the theory of Samskara. Pray, what theory does he hope to buy? It is clear that he is willing to discard any theory that goes against his values and outlook. A blind man cannot see any worth in any theory.

Sasanka Gupta, Calcutta

Mr Singh managed to drag God into his Gossip column; I am really surprised by his infinite wisdom and sense of humour. One thing, of course, is clear: God can create, and in fact He has created, all sorts of people—some of whom, like Mr Singh, consider themselves very witty and wise. People like Einstein did not air their views on a subject which they could not comprehend; but Mr Singh spelt out his views which, quite honestly, were neither

Highly communal

Syed Shahabuddin exposed himself as a communalist (Mrs Gandhi and the Muslim vote, 20 March). It is clear that he is trying to provoke the other communities, the Hindus in particular Being an avid reader of Sunday, I hope that articles like the one by Mr Shahabuddin will not be published in future. C. Ravinder Reddy, Hyderabad

Mr Shahabuddin arrived at some very hasty conclusions. According to him, the Muslims are finding Mrs Gandhi unhelpful; as for the BJP, they do not trust this party. I would like to point out that the BJP has fared very well in all the byelections held since Mrs Gandhi's return to power. In the Himayatnagar constituency, the BJP routed Telugu Desam. Now, the point is: Don't the Muslims have a sizeable population in Himayatnagar?

I personally feel that the Muslims are viewing the BJP as the only viable

alternative.

V. Rajagopalan, Bangalore

In his interview with Tavleen Singh ("I grew up with a complex that I was ugly" 17 April), Pakistani cricketer Imran Khan had said, "I'm supposed to have acted in a pornographic film." This comment was inadvertently published as "I've already acted in a pornographic film." The error is regretted—Editor

sweet nor sour. Debu Paul, Calcutta

The incident which Khushwant Singh mentioned involved three main parties: the four-year-old boy who was knocked down by a speeding hus and killed instantaneously; the driver of the truck who escaped after killing the boy; and finally, the parents who suf-

fered irreparable loss.

Basing my arguments on the scriptures I can safely say that the victim was free from sin and he, thereby, entered heaven to enjoy everlasting peace. He did not suffer pain at the time of the accident because his death was instantaneous. The driver of the truck cannot escape punishment. He disappeared from the scene after the accident, but that does not imply that he got away scotfree. God was a witness to the crime and He will punish the driver in good time. As for the bereaved parents, perhaps the following story will prove my point:

A widow had a lovely daughter who, at the age of three, fell very ill. The doctors gave up all hope The widow prayed to God for her daughter's life. The child survived. But at 17, she committed suicide. The pain which her widowed mother suffered then was far greater than what she would have undergone if the girl had died at the

age of three.

M. J. Edwards, Bangalore

Distortion

I saw the English version of Attenborough's Gandhi. Undoubtedly it is a spectacular movie, and though a bit lengthy, people keep their interest alive till the end. But, to highlight a character, the historical facts should never be distorted.

Pakistan got its independence on 14 August, and India a day later. Hence, these incidents should have been in this chronology. But in the film, India preceeds Pakistan in her independence. It is a historical distortion. Even at this stage if the mistake could be rectified, viewers would be grateful to the producers of this film.

Usha Devi, Khairagarh

Turn over, please

Question: What is the special quality of the Quiz column in SUNDAY?

Answer: Informative or not, educative or not, it is extremely irritating since everytime you want to see an answer, you have to turn the magazine upside down—like this...

A. R. Ramanarayanan, Rourkela

Last letter

By virtue of its successive exposes in the recent past, Sunday has emergedasthe onlynational alternative to Mrs Gandhi.

Sapan Chaurasia, Mesra (Bihar)

COVER STORY



'I am unlike a military dictator. I am not a vindictive man.'

Gen. H. M. ERSHAD of Bangladesh talks to M. J. AKBAR

The helicopter has become a vital weapon in the most serious war that a ruler has to fight—against time. If you wear a gun with the right ammunition in Bangladesh you can walk over any day (or any night) and take over power; hanging on is another matter altogether. Experience shows that any gentleman taking over a government after a short ride on a tank spends his first spell in office distributing power to those who helped him sit on the chair so that everyone important gets his or her share of the cake while the people are told to be quiet and listen to what is good for them. It is the second stage which gets more difficult, because now the ruler, driven by a combination of guilt and necessity, begins to seek the legitimacy of popular approval. In some regimes the search for such legitimacy takes a while, in other military governments it begins earlier, depending on circumstance. Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammad Ershad, who asked Justice Sattar, then elected President of Bangladesh, to take premature retirement from the travails of running the country one night a little more than a year ago (on the night of |23-24| March 1982, to be precise) has embarked upon the second stage. Having consolidated his control over the machinery of power, he has begun his effort to create some popular support for his leadership. The helicopter comes in very handy in this exercise. It helps you to show your face more often, more frequently, to more people in more parts of the country than anyone else. That, itself, is

often the difference between victory and defeat.

Tangail district, about 100 miles to the northwest of Dhaka, has two good reasons to be proud of itself. One is of course the famous and eminently saleable Tangail sari. The second is the equally famous, but possibly less popular, Maulana Bhashani. The Maulana was a unique figure in Bangladesh, propounding a socialist economy, living a Gandhian life, and underlaying everything with a complete commitment to the values and practice of Islam. He possessed nothing but a Koran, a walking stick, a few simple handspun clothes and a hut, and these were enough to see him through to his death. He also possessed, of course, a commanding voice which was heard with respect throughout the land even if the political party formed by the Maulana never made much headway in the number of votes it polled. But the Maulana was an effective counterpoint to Sheikh Mujib, being anti-Indian against the Sheikh's pro-Delhi leanings. Eventually, of course, it was the Maulana and his pro-Beijingsection of the ruling class that won the day. But despite this victory, and the fact that the Maulana left behind nothing for his family when he died, no one in Dhaka remembered the widow of the man they all praised. On Thursday, 7 April, however, General Ershad flew to the village called Santosh where the Maulana lived in Tangail district to formally hand over the modest house that the army had constructed on the site of the Maulana's hut to his ageing widow. The general

Gen. Hussain Mohammed Ershad with his wife Begum Roushan: in search of a new identity



very kindly invited me to accompany him on this

helicopter journey.

The earth always looks beautiful from the eye of the bird, but Bangladesh has something special to offer. Its rivers flow lazily across the land, curving in circuitous arches, in no hurry to get to the end of their journey. Boats with their sails up, wind their way down the rivers, one after the other, like Phoenician convoys from the illustrations of school history books. The land is a hundred shades of green, enough to satiate the greediest artist's palate. The clusters of rich trees, rounded and leafy and surely pregnant with the promise of fruit, dot the earth. The land is patterned by human claims, streaks dividing brother from brother, small parcels of field, man's little acres representing perhaps all that is both right and wrong with life. Then the helicopter lowers, and soon you can see the upturned faces of the villagers, staring from the courtyards of their huts, the mud tracks of their villages at the helicopter, a technological marvel of a century they still have not quite entered.

A reception committee led by the ever-smiling Major General Abdur Rahman, martial law administrator of Zone One (the Dhaka area, and therefore one of the most powerful army commanders today) awaits Chief Martial Law Administrator General Ershad. (Incidentally, General Ershad is not the President of Bangladesh.) A convoy of 16 vehicles races behind the General's Japanese limousine to the village where the General formally enters the house with a prayer and Mrs Ershad hands over the keys to the ageing widow of the Maulana (who was in burga).

But of course there was more to this journey than simple generosity to the departed leader. Here was one more opportunity for General Ershad to visit a constituency that he is currently cultivating, the young. An organisation called the Nutan Bangla Chatra Samaj has already taken shape. It is not affiliated to any existing political party; that of course is because it is de facto if not de jure affiliated to General Ershad. This has been conceived as the launching pad for the eventual take-off of an organisation which, as the BNP did for General Zia, become the vehicle for the "democratic" confirmation of Mr Ershad's rule. The general of course denies such motivations, but his denials are not convincing. "Nutan Bangla" (a new Bengal) is his slogan, and he obviously sees himself at the head of the march towards the New Bengal. The Ershad youths were there in force, building up the needed atmosphere with appropriate slogans like "Ershad tumi egiye chalo, amra tomar pichone achi (Ershad, you go ahead, we are behind you)." At the dais from where Ershad spoke it was in fact the army officers who were seated behind the general and the students who were in front of him, but perhaps this was what the Chief Martial Law Administrator of Bangladesh was trying to reverse.

The crumbs being thrown at the political parties they are to be allowed something described as "indoor politics;" one wonders if that is an unnecessary permission in Bangladesh since who ever stopped doing "indoor politics" in that country? But General Ershad is in no mood to hand over power soon. There is no chance of his own capabilities being tested by the litmus of popular opinion till 1985 at the very earliest. Bangladesh can look forward to some years of "friendly" military rule: in other words, it will be friendly as long as you let them rule. There will be the semblance of stability in the country, but stability should not necessarily be considered a synonym of success. People forget that the army, which has now ruled Bangladesh for far longer than the civilians, has failed as badly as the civilians in either providing development or stability. Even the one great hope of the army, General Zia, had to die a meaningless death. General Ershad feels that only a massive reorientation of the administrative system combined with an assured place for the army in any government can bring some peace and a bit of prosperity to a nation born in war and reared in poverty. He will spend the foreseeable future trying to prove he is right.

: Politics is often determined by the past. Could you give your views on the two dominant figures of independent Bangladesh. Sheikh Mujib and General Zia? How would you assess them and their historic role?

A: Would it be fair on my part to criticise them? Q: I would expect a rational assessment of history;

nothing personal in that.

A: All the past leaders have made their contributions to this country, and Sheikh Mujib naturally was in the forefront of the fight for an independent Bangladesh. From that point of view, his contribution is very much there. And after that General Zia evolved a system in which the development of the country was given foremost place. He worked very hard and I must say that in the five years he was in power the country made considerable progress.

Q: To go back to what the two leaders represented: Sheikh Mujib ruled by a popular mandate, General Zia because of the army. Why do you think Sheikh Mujib

failed?

A: I am too small a person to criticise him, but what I can evaluate now—you know, Sheikh Mujib ruled just after the liberation war, the economy was in a very shattered condition; most of the government executives had left the country because they were Pakistanis; there was no industrial or administrative infrastructure; and then the political leaders who ruled the country at that time did not have that much experience. All this had its effect on the total administration of this country. Naturally they could not cope up with the needs of the time.

Q: The question one is really leading up to is: can

democracy survive in Bangladesh?

A: We as a nation are very democratically minded. If anywhere democracy can survive, Bangladesh is a country where it will survive. But every nation (hesitates) has its own way of implementing democracy. It may not be the Westminster type, it may not be the American type, it may not be your type; but democracy as such, meaning people's rule, will surely survive in Bangladesh. We are all very democratically minded. It is just that we belong to the army, that's all.

Q: So you have an army type democracy in Bang-

ladesh?

A: The army people are very democratically minded. We protected democracy. We were the first people to take up arms when democracy was being trampled (before liberation).

Q: And does that entitle the Bangladesh army to have a special role in the governance of the country?

A: Our history should allow the Bangladesh army a special place in our country because of its peculiar role which I mentioned to you. This is the army which took up arms to protect the democratic rights of the people. Sheikh Mujib won the elections but he was not allowed to form the government and take up the prime ministership of Pakistan. We took up arms. Therefore it cannot be bracketed with any other army in the world. It has a special role to play.



If anywhere democracy can survive Bangladesh is a country where it will survive... We are all very democratically minded. It is just that we belong to the army, that's all. Q: You wouldn't go to the extent of calling it a revolutionary army?

A: Not exactly a revolutionary army, but an army

which matches the aspirations of the people.

Q: But there are elements within the Bangladesh army now who were in Pakistan during the 1971 war: how do they fit in with your concept of what the Bangladesh army is?

A: We were all at that time Pakistanis, so how does

that matter?

Q. Well, if the army is going to claim its special position because of its role in 1971, how do you account for the fact that a number of officers in the army today

were on the side of Pakistan in that war?

A: What happened during the last great war? Do you think that the British soldiers who got imprisoned in Germany were not part of the war? It was a similar case here. We happened to be there, some of us, and we were prisoners. That does not mean that then aspirations were not for a free Bangladesh. This thing you have got wrong in your country. You should start the history of Bangladesh prior to the liberation war, (by considering) how the army was feeling at that time against Pakistani repression and economic exploitation of our country. Some soldiers (caught in Pakistan) did escape, but it was not easy for 30,000 people to escape. In his heart every Bangladeshi was involved in the liberation war.

Q. But this question does keep arising.

A. These are wrong questions, deliberately put up to create a division within the nation. It is not right and we have proved that it is not right. Every Bangladeshi, wherever he may be, fought for liberation. Someone could not take up arms, someone had the opportunity to do so.

• After coming to power through a coup, General Zia eventually set up a democratic system through elections. Then came the tragedy of his death, but the system he had created survived: Justice Sattar succeeded. There were elections, in which the BNP formally won. But he had to be removed by the aimy too Why do you consider Justice Sattar to have been a failure?

A: I have to go back to history. In the later part of General Zia's regime there was some sort of a murmur going on in the country that his party people were resorting to corruption. And General Zia was aware of it, and he was about to launch a purge by which he would clean the party, shedding the corrupt people. But before he could do that he was killed.

Q: Do you think this expected purge was the cause

of General Zia's assassination?

A: It is very difficult to say; very, very difficult to say. But later on, Justice Sattar failed to carry on and his party continued to indulge in all that which was resented by the people and lost his popularity very quickly. Moreover, he was an old man, and he was not in a position to control the hoodlums in his party. He became very unpopular. Martial law: I tell you, every-

We have not yet been able to come to any conclusion about the sharing of (the Ganges) waters. Until a final solution is found the irritation will remain.





In martial law it is easier to get some policy impolicy implemented. All these rules and regulations can be bypassed: it is for the good of the people. Brings quick results: why not?

body wanted a change as everybody telt this administration was not going to deliver the goods. He (Justice Sattar) was not in a position to purge his party.

Q: So you would say that you moved in under the

people's pressure?

A: I hesitated for quite a long period. But I have also some duty to the nation. We were the only disciplined force which could do something to stop this (rot). (Our coup) was the only bloodless transfer of power in this country. So far it had always been bloody. The people's support was very much there. And of course we tried to keep up with the people's hopes and aspirations and took some measures.

Q. There has been an allegation that the trial of the alleged murderers of President Zia was over too quickly and it should have been conducted in public.

A. You are not an army man. We tried those persons for mutiny. Mutiny is an army crime and is always tried by the army tribunal, the army courts, and is normally held in camera because we do not want the people to know about the mutiny in case it has an adverse effect on the people's morale. There is nothing new we have done. All over the world, even in your country, mutiny is an army matter. We tried them for mutiny; we didn't try them for the killing of General Zia.

Q: But obviously there were political implications in the assassination.

A. Why should there be political implications? They were aimy soldiers and, plain and simple, they committed a mutiny: they went to the TV station, they captured it; it is a clear case of mutiny and they were tried for it. The killing of General Zia was a civil

offence. Murder, rape etc. are civil offences, we don't try them. But mutiny...

Q: But would not any form of takeover by the army, replacing an existing government, be a form of

mutiny?

A: No. It (the government following a coup) is a legal form of government. You must know this. There are only two forms of government in the world. Government is either by ballot or by bullet. This (Ershad's government) is the first (real) coup because the whole armed forces took part in the coup or military takeover. This is a legal takeover. That's the law. All over the world military governments are working. They are legal.

Q: Why do you think you will succeed where others

have tailed?

A: I have not said we have succeeded. We are trying to succeed. In a country like Bangladesh with so many problems we have to work very hard, relentlessly, to give something to the people. And I feel we have the capability to do something.

Q: You mean the army has the capability?

A: The people also. It is the civilians who are mainly working. We are giving the ideas, the policies and trying to get the policies implemented. In martial law it is easier to get some policies implemented. All these

rules and regulations can be bypassed; it is for the good of the people. Brings quick results: Why not? That is why probably we could implement a few things—all these things in one year's time—in administration, industrial policy. In industrial policy we have taken a very major step; in twelve years nobody could dare to do it. We have already achieved eight per cent growth rate in six months' time. We have almost reached our export target for the year; in a month or so we will surpass it. In martial law it is easier to implement policies

Q: These corruption cases you have brought against some BNP leaders: you have been accused of being

vindictive

A: One thing nobody will tell in this country is that General Ershad is a vindictive man I am very liberal. I am unlike a military dictator. I am not a vindictive

Q I was not talking of personal vindictiveness, but of

political anger.

A: These (the accused) are the people who were responsible for General Zia's bad name. These are the people who were responsible for the change of government in this country. Go anywhere and find out the public opinion about them I don't think you will find sympathy for the people who are being tried. Why should I be vindictive against them? Who can come in my way? No one. But we have to try them because the people are asking for their trial. There are many other people whom we should have tried, but often you don't find any evidence. We don't have kangaroo courts. You can check our documents. It is a thorough procedure. The cases are reviewed by six judges in my headquarters. I don't think I can sort of convince a judge, you know, to bend his judgment. That's not possible.

 Another problem that Bangladesh is said to have faced is interference by foreign powers. Do vou think foreign powers still play a role in the

changing of governments?

A: (Laughs) Until I am changed by a foreign power I can't say anything (*more laughter*). But you know in a country like ours, which is poor, and depends largely on foreign aid there is definitely an influence on your policies. That you understand They have influence on your government. The IMF.

Q How do you tackle them?

A. You are such a big country with an industrial base; even then you are vulnerable. There is interference. At times certain things are imposed on you; at times it is very degrading. But you have to take it. We need the money. I don't think we can always consider it political influence, but sometimes that cannot be denied also

Q. What role do you think India plays now in

Bangladesh?

A: We are good friends and after I took over I tried to improve relations with India, I tried to remove certain misunderstandings that both the countries have. And I

There are only two forms of government in the world. Government is either by ballot or by bullet ... All over the world military governments are working.





In a country like ours, which is poor, and depends largely on foreign aid there is definitely an influence (of the donors) on your policies... They have influence on your government. The IMF.

Q: What were the misunderstandings that you have

helped cleary

A. You know, water is the main problem. It is a very difficult issue for us; as a matter of fact we call it a life and death issue. We have 57 rivers coming from your territory to our territory and almost all the river waters have been withdrawn for your purpose and we are suffering. The Ganges being the main river, it is both a commercial lifeline and serves irrigation purposes. We have not yet been able to come to any conclusion about the sharing of waters. Until a final solution is found the irritation will remain.

Q: There are certain elements in Bangladesh which keep accusing India of trying to topple governments in

Dhaka.

A: I cannot substantiate any such accusation; it is very difficult to say and unnecessarily why should I accuse any country. All countries try to influence others, but that does not mean they are trying to topple a government.

Q. Recently there was flap over a map published in Bangladesh which showed Kashmir as disputed terri-

tory and Sikkim outside India.

A: The only thing they made a mistake about was that Sikkim was shown as an independent state. I have already taken the surveyor general to task; they made a mistake.

Q: What is your stand on Kashmir?

A: Kashmir (laughs) I think is still a disputed territory; no solution has been found. If a peaceful solution is there we will be very happy. We are now advocating regional cooperation and if all these smaller irritations are removed we will be very happy.

O: There was a statement made by you after the nonkaligned'summit in which you said that you had met the Afghan government leaders and all misunderstandings between Bangladesh and Afghanistan had

been removed.

A: This is a complete misinterpretation of what I think there was a positive response from your side. said. The question is of trade; we have not cut off all relations with them. Not even Pakistan has done so and they are fighting with them. I met the Premier of Afghanistan and I came to know that they are purchasing our jute and tea via Pakistan. I said, why not buy from us directly. We have got a mission and I will tell my mission to contact your government. Of course we still maintain our national stand about the occupation troops in Afghanistan, and at the non-aligned summit we brought it out. But in trade and commerce...In any case we do not have any animosity towards their country; this is a national stand on the question of foreign troops.

> Now to your future plans. Are you thinking of starting a political party?

A: (Laughs) I have not thought of it yet.

Q: How do you hope to institutionalise your government and the role of the armed forces in power?

A: We have allowed political parties to have indoor meetings. I am going to meet them (political leaders) one by one, talk to them, find out what is on their minds. And I am sure that we can come to a consensus. In due course all these constitutional problems can be solved.

Q: What would be your first priority: development of the country or to recreate the political process?

A: The two must be placed side by side—political process and development. Development is very vital for the country. There must be development. At the same time the political process should also start.

Q: Do you see the army even giving up its position in

government?

A. Gen Zia, when he took over, too was in the army. But then he gave up the army and we had nothing to do with the government. A similar thing can happen again

Q: Are you then saying that just as Gen Zia created his BNP you are trying, or would like to create, your

own political party?

A: I said very clearly that I am not into politics now. My policy and Gen. Zia's policy are different. He did politics in uniform. He was chief of staff and at the same time the head of his party and the President of the country. I have no such desire.

Q: Many observers have seen the creating of the Natun Bangla Chatra Samaj as an effort made—by what might be called your constituency—to build a

base for a political party.

A: My constituency, if I have a political party, will be the village. I have been there extensively and I think I know them (the villagers) now. But if there are some students and if they want to join, if they want a forum and want to serve Gen. Ershad's programme, I cannot say don't do it. If some youths join hands and say that Gen. Ershad is doing a good thing and they want to support me, that does not necessarily become my forum. That is why it (Natun Bangla Chatra Samaj) is not my forum. You can't always expect everybody to oppose the government, there must be some people who support it.

Q: But the reality of life is that people who have vested interests in being nice to those in power would go out of their way to create and organise such functions. In any case, would these be the launching

pad for a political organisation?

A: Well, I have not thought of (forming) a political party as yet But if the energy of the youth can be diverted to development work in the villages and thanas, it will be good for the country. And you know, we don't want people to get mixed up with politics. At least, that is what I feel personally. If we can keep the students away from politics and get them to do development work, it will be a real contribution to the nation. The reason why they have associated this organisation with my name is because of its name:

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the country.





We said we would establish Islamic idealism in our country. We didn't actually mean an Islamic state. Bangladesh will remain as it is.

Nutan Bangla. Nutan Bangla was my slogan, to create a new Bengal. But they also associated themselves with the new Bengal idea. So it does not mean that they are associating themselves with me personally. Anyone can support my ideas and policies. You can say that these policies of mine are good and these are bad, that doesn't mean that you belong to my party.

Q: It is nice to say that you won't do politics in uniform, but when you govern and you are in power,

you are, in fact, in politics.

A: I am. Of course, I am. But doing politics in a political party is different from running a government and the politics involved in running a government.

Q: What do you hope to do in the next 12 months? What are your targets?

A: The target is to complete some of the projects, implement land reforms and implement fully the industrial policy as well as whatever policies we have undertaken.

Q: Would you also keep among your targets the restoration of a free and open atmosphere, in the sense of a press which is not censored...

A: We hardly censor the press.

Q: But you still retain the authority to do so.

A: When we allow political activities to resume...Even then, nowadays we don't-censor the press. They can write anything and everything. But there is some yellow journalism, some weekly papers write all sorts of nonsense and I request them again and again not to do it. That day there was this news item which said that Gen. Ershad is becoming the president or being chosen the prime minister and all sorts of misleading news. If I wanted to be the president, I would have become the president on 13 May. I didn't want to. This is what you call yellow journalism. There must be some norms, some ethics. I will give you an example-in a paper there was this headline: "Firing in the cantonment." The paper sold like hot cakes. But in fact this incident had taken place somewhere in Iran. This is atrocious, this is not correct, I do not like it. I completed building the Press Club for the journalists, I give full respect to them, I take along a lot of journalists with me when I go out so that they can mix with people and exchange some views. But they must not do something which damages the nation.

Q: But don't you think that a controlled press, which is what you have in Bangladesh, equally damages the nation because it prevents the truth from coming out?

A: I am allowing all the journalists in the world to come and see what is happening here.

Q:I was talking about your own journalists.

A: Foreign journalists coming here and seeing what is happening and your own journalists writing about it is more or less the same thing. Today, there are about four or five journalists from your country who are here and you are going where you want to. I have not put any check (on your activities). Let journalists from outside come and see my country, what we are doing here and project it outside. That is why I expose my

country. All journalists are welcome anytime.

Q: Why don't you relax the atmosphere further by lifting the curfew? There is curfew from one am to four am.

A: I can lift the curfew even tomorrow. It has been there for the last six years. Curfew is not there because of martial law; it is there to control crime. It is not for any other reason.

Q: Curfew has never stopped a coup...

A: (Laughs) Curfew I can lift tomorrow. I have never thought of it.

Q: Perhaps you should. It would be a psychological change from the past.

A: Okay, I'll think over it.

Q: One or two asides: you met Jaspal Singh (the controversial police commissioner of Baroda) when you were in Delhi.

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: The story going around is that you met a tantrik

also when you were there.

A: He (Jaspal Singh) said that one of his friends was interested in meeting him and so he came over. Whether or not he happens to be a tantric I do not know. He said that he could tell me what is going to happen to my country. He wanted to come to my country to see for himself. I told him that he was welcome; anyone is welcome to my country.

Q: What did he say about your country?

A: He did not say anything about the future. He said he would like to come to Bangladesh to see for himself and then he could let me know what is going to happen to my country.

Q: To get back to a more serious subject, where would you place Bangladesh in the Islamic world today? You said in January that Bangladesh should move towards becoming an Islamic republic.

A: Not in that sense. We said we would establish Islamic idealism in our country. We didn't actually mean an Islamic state. Bangladesh will remain as it is. We said we must reflect Islamic values in our day-to-day life which probably we are not doing at the present moment and we should move closer to the Islamic world. We have already moved very close to the Islamic world.

Q: How would you define the Islamic ideals that you would like to make a part of your country? For example, would you go to the extent of Gen. Zia by

imposing it in the criminal procedures?

A: No, not in our country. We are a different nation. We are very deeply religious, of course. But we are not fanatics, far from it. We want to truly reflect Islamic ideals in our day-to-day life. We always believe that by doing that we may be able to improve our social conditions which have deteriorated.

Q: For example the principle of equality in Islam?
A: Jf course equality is there, but also tolerance and

We (the army) don't want to rule this country. We want to be with the people, with the administration so that these kinds of adventures (coups and counter-coups) do not take place





Now I have allowed these private political meetings. But I do not know who to call to talk to, because every party is divided into three or four factions.

respect for other religions. These are all Islamic ideals. And we are really, truly following it here. But we want to introduce it seriously in schools and colleges so that Islamic ideals are developed in them (students).

Q: What would you say sparked off violence in Dhaka university on 14 February? Was it not over your education policy? Why did the students react so

violently?

A: It was not over the education policy as such. They (the students) have not read the education policy at all. In this country the political parties agitate against any government and the instrument for agitation is either the people or the students. In our country the students are very volatile, they have many problems: unemployment, the (economic) conditions are very bad. So they (the political parties) easily find the student community joining hands with them. And, of course, money does play a great role. In this particular case (14 February) they could not find the people with them and the call by political parties for a hartal was a miserable failure. So some of the political parties led a few students to do all these things (agitate). Dhaka university has 18,000 students and that day only three or four thousand students joined them. All the good students kept away from the university. And you can always collect a few thousand students by money or slogans. We tried to tackle the situation; we tried to convince these people not to take the path of violence. We were assured (by them) that they would not do it (indulge in violent activities), that they would just place some demands. I said okay, we don't want to interfere if you want to do just that. As a martial law administrator I should not have allowed it, I should not have allowed them to come out of the university. But as I have a very soft corner for the students I said okay: I will allow only this much and not beyond. But there were some other elements who took over the situation and the situation went out of control.

Q: But the theory that the student agitation was motivated by the feeling that Arabic was going to play

a major part...

A: Arabic is still being taught in the lower classes in our schools. The problem is that they did not know this. Arabic is being taught from class two or three. We wanted to introduce it from class one, side by side with English and Bengali. That's the only difference. But Arabic is still being taught in our primary schools.

In our days there was the Maulana saab who used to come over to our house and teach us Arabic so that we could read the Koran. What we wanted to do, what I said was that now you have to employ a teacher to teach your children Arabic and you have to pay him Taka 200. (By introducing Arabic from class one) it is not teaching anybody any language as such. In class one or two you don't teach anyone any language, you only teach them the alphabets so that they can read the script. Gradually they can read a whole book and in the higher classes it can be introduced as a language so that they can get employment outside, in the Middle East. It is good for the country. That was the objective.

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How would you define your relationship with Saudi Arabia at the moment?

A: Good. We have good relations with all Muslim countries. We are members of the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Q: Do you think your candidate will get the general

secretaryship of the Islamic Conference?

A: How do I know? It is very difficult to say. There are 45 countries. But about 20 to 21 countries have told me that they are going to support our candidate. But Pakistan has not (supported our candidate) they are also going to come up with a candidate.

Q: How would you rate the Awami League's position

today?

- A: As a matter of fact you should ask me how I assess all political parties today: the situation with all of them is more or less the same. The parties are fighting amongst themselves. And now I have allowed these private political meetings. But I do not know who to call to talk to because every party is divided into three or four factions.
- Q: Some people are giving you the credit for doing
- A: I see; then I have already become a politician. That is the role the political parties play in this country: to divide the political parties. The BNP is divided into two factions, similar is the case with the Awami League, JSD and the Muslim League. So, I do not exactly know in what condition the political parties are today. But none of the political parties are united; that's the feeling I get.

Q: Do you think there is anyone in the political field who can emerge as a leader in the near future?

- A: Very difficult to say, it is for the people to decide.
- Q: Do you think you will give them a chance to go to the polls very soon?

A: Sure, I will give them a chance. I have promised, I cannot make false promises.

Q: When do you propose to hold the elections? A: I haven't given the people any time frame within which the elections will be held.

Q: But let's say within 1984?

A: Yes, yes, sometime around the winter of 1984.

Q: In a country which has such a history of coups and abrupt transfers of power, what promise of stability do you see? Do you think that in this country the government can be stable?

A: One happy sign is that people do not want instability any longer. And when I have promised the people that I will return democracy to them, and if I keep my promise, I am sure there is going to be stability. And in this context I must mention that the army must play a role precisely for this purpose: ensure stability, ensure that no further bloodshed takes place. We don't want to rule this country. We want to be with the people, with the administration so that these kind of adventures does not take place in future. Bloodshed must be stopped.

Perhaps this is a noble intention, but this should not be misunderstood by politicians or outsiders. We have lost Sheikh Mujib, we have lost Gen Zia, leaders have been killed in jail, people have been hanged. We have hanged 12 officers; it is very painful, it is like hanging your own children. These were my officers; I had to

order it.

Q: In which case was this?

A: Gen Zia's case. This should not happen. Everytime it happens we go back: the whole world becomes suspicious, foreign investors feel shy, progress is retarded. So I just want to stop it. Therefore, I have told the people that this is a different type of army, take them along with you, inform them about what you are doing. We don't want to rule you, to dictate you; just inform us about what you are doing. (After all) we sacrificed so much for this country, we were the people to first pick up arms, so we have a right to know what the people are doing. If you fail, it does not matter; we have all tried.

Ershad's Sufi Saint

Among the millions of followers of Shah Sufi Faridpuri, the pir of Atroshi. are the chief martial law administrator of Bangladesh, Gen. H. M. Ershad and some of the country's most powerful leaders. SYED KAMALUDDIN reports that though the views of the military leaders of the country do not always coincide with those of the pir, they frequently seek his counsel.

hah Sufi Faridpuri, as he is popularly known, is an ordinary-looking man in his early 70s. His 5-ft 3-in. frame, clothed only in the long white kurta shirt and lungi of a middle-class Bangladeshi, is distinguished only by a longish beard and deep, penetrating eyes. But when this unassuming Muslim pir (holy man) speaks from his home in Atroshi Thana, 110 miles southeast of Dhaka, the country listens. His followers are said to number in the millions, and among them are some of the government's most powerful civilian and military leaders, including chief martial-law administrator Lieut-Gen. II. M. Ershad.

But the Atroshi pir's political views do not always coincide with those of the country's rulers who frequently seek his counsel. In a rare interview, he said: "The most important and sacred role of the army is to defend the motherland. They can assist the civilian government in times of emergency and natural calamity, but they cannot have any role to play in running the government in normal times. The army should become strong and disciplined, (maintaining) a high professional standard."

This view is in direct conflict with that held by Gen. Ershad, who is now seeking to amend the constitution to ensure a role for the army in governing Bangladesh. He says this is necessary for a smooth transition of power from his martial law administrators to a civilian government, but clearly he feels the army should have a governing role whether civilians are in power or not.

While the Atroshi pir seems to be siding with the politicians on this vital issue, the holy man's ties with the army's rank and file are strong. About 50 key army officers are among the pir's followers, including Maj. Abdur; Gen. Nuruddin Ahmed Khan, army chief of general staff; Maj. Gen. Rahman, commander of the strategically important 9th Division in Dhaka; Maj. Gen. Antiqur Rahman, principal staff officer to Ershad; Maj Gen. Abdul Wahed, commander of the Jessore garrison; Brig. Mahmudul Hasan, directorgeneral of forces (intelligence); Brig. Abdullah al Hussain, chairman of the first special military tribunal, and Brig. Matiur Rahman, deputy director-general of the Bangladesh Rifles—a paramilitary border force. In addition, nearly 20,000 soldiers are also known to be disciples of the pir.

The generals visit the holy man frequently—sometimes together and sometimes separately. Ershad, Nuruddin and Abdur Rahman attended a three-day religious function on 20-22 February to mark the anniversary of the death of Shah Sufi Yunus Ali Enayetpuri, the Atroshi pir's spiritual mentor.

The pir said the army enjoys the love and affection of the nation. "The generals, including Ershad," he said, "never visit me to discuss politics or state policy. They come as my disciples and for their own (personal) satisfaction. I tell them to remain united and to do good for the people. They have their own cabinet to discuss politics and take decisions on political matters. I only tell them to do their job properly."

Retired lieutenant-general Mir Shaokat Ali, who left active duty soon after President Ziaur Rahman's assassination in May 1981, is said to have been

instrumental in forging links between the influential pir and the army over the past few years. When he was commander of the Jessore garrison he sent his troops by the truckload to Atroshi to visit the pir. More than 15,000 soldiers, who are now dispersed throughout the country, are said to have been made followers of the

holy man through this means.

Asked if he would direct his millions of followers to support any particular political party or vote for any candidate in a presidential election, the Atroshi pir said that he could not do that, as his was a spiritual platform and not a political one. Bangladesh needed a selfless leader who would work for the country and would try to take decisions according to Islamic values and ideals—to do good and provide justice for the people, he said. "I am praying to Allah to give us a selfless, God-fearing leader—(even one) who may not be my disciple. My moral support will be there for him."

The pir was a relatively obscure figure until the mid-1970s, though he has been preaching Islam in Atroshi since 1948. The holy man follows the Sufi doctrine which he—like other Sufi masters including his spiritual mentor—claims to have inherited from the Prophet. He follows the Naqshbandiya-

Muzaddidiya school of Sufi thought.

For years the holy man faced an uphill battle with the Muslim establishment. As late as 1963, 39 well-known clergymen and theologians jointly proclaimed him an infidel, and he was under attack from many others until 1971. His situation began to improve after that, and since 1975 his fame and following increased many times. His eldest son-in-law, Adeluddin Hawladar, a rich businessman and a former MP, says that many among the 39 clergymen and theologians who once called him an infidel have become his disciples.

The pir is a hard-working man. He never forgets his former life of dire poverty when, at times, he went without food for days. He starts his day at 3 am—after three hours of sleep—with special prayers attended by many others in the Atroshi mosque Then the early morning namaz are recited before his daily chores begin. He eats very little, taking specially prepared rice with a vegetable for lunch—his only daily meal. At night he takes a glass of milk, or similar drink, with one small piece of home-made sweet.

Today, 500-1,500 people visit the pir daily, including some 40-50 Hindus. The pilgrims usually stay overnight. Room and board are provided at no cost, with all expense covered by gifts brought or sent to the pir by his disciples. He receives annually several thousand tons of rice, thousands of animals, and tons of fish and vegetables. The pir does not accept any money from the Bangladesh government or from any other Islamic country, though other Islamic organisations in the

country do so.

The holy man visits the religious complex's kitchen to arrange meals for the hundreds of his disciples who see him daily at three special chambers set up for the purpose. He spends much of his time meeting people, listening to their grievances and advising them on such matters as marriage, divorce, the selling of property or starting up a new business. He never seems to tire.

Assam and Punjab

By PRAN CHOPRA

hat was feared has happened: Punjab has started on the trail of Assam. It has not travelled very far as yet. Its 30 odd deaths do not compare with Assam's 3,000 plus. But there is the same smell of inevitability, helplessness, frustration, and the consequences can be even more serious, if that is possible. Bows and arrows will not be used here, but swords and guns. The army may be affected, not students, tribals and helpless immigrants; and a fully armed foreign power will be looking in from a few kilometres away.

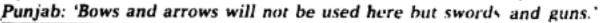
The causes of the two tragedies have a doomsday similarity about them, among which complacence is the foremost. The authorities concerned with Assam assumed that a few tricks would do, such as springing the surprise of elections in the midst of negotiations and locking the doors of the courts with the midnight notification. It was left to a political-

ly illiterate Governor to assess the seriousness of the local situation

This compounded the blunders New Delhi had made earlier: it assumed it had exhausted the leaders of the students' movement by dragging them through round after round of "negotiations" in which a settlement always appeared to be round the corner but kept receding like a mirage; it was assumed the back of what remained of the movement would be broken by playing upon the religious, ethnic and ling uistic cleavages which exist in Assam; opponents of the movement received instant patronage in New Delhi. But what was created instead was a monster of what looks like interminable violence in which everyone is at everyone else's throat. Tribal fury was stirred up in a way no one had bargained for. A problem which was difficult at best has been made intractable. The security of a most sensitive and crucially important area has been put in jeopardy A

shameful blot has been cast upon the electoral processe and the only good that has come out of it is that the CPI(M) has received a thoroughly well deserved slap on its face

Complacence has taken its foll in Punjab as well. The government believed it could bottle up the Akalı movement in Punjab. To this end it tried two things. One tailed, the other will. At the time of the Asiad, the government tried to snuff out the Akalı morcha in New Delhi by preventing Punjab Sikhs from travelling to the capital. But this shameless manoeuvre became a thorough failure. The Akalis carried out their programme of courting arrests at the proclaimed level, and on the concluding day were able to offer as many as 1,400 volunteers for arrest. The roadblocks set up by the Haryana government to weed out Sikh travellers only succeeded in causing bitter resentment and provocation even among those Sikhs in Punjab, and many Hindus too, who





had not been supporting the Akali agitation.

Mrs Gandhi has since tried to divide the Delhi Sikhs from the Punjab Sikhs. She used a platform offered her by a dissident Akalı splinter in New Delhi to announce partial acceptance of some of the religious demands of the Amritsarbased main Akali movement, hoping to take the wind out of the latter's political sails. But the manoeuvre is not working out Even the Delhi Sikhs have protested against the latest police firings on Akali agitators in Punjab, which have been denounced by some of Punjab's Hindu leaders also. In fact the Sikhs have been forced to unite increasingly behind the more militant Akali leadership in Amritsar, and by dissolving the Delhi Akali Dal on 10 April the Akalı hıgh command in Amritsar has pulled the rug from under the dissident group in Delhi. The Delhi dissidents are closer to the extremist Sikh leaders in Amritsar than to the moderate ones. This fact was ignored by Mrs Gandhi in extending her patronage to them, which only shows how short term political considerations are placed above long term national interests.

It is not that solutions are not possible. In both cases there were moments of great opportunity, but they were spurned by the government. In the case of Assam the two sides had agreed in principle on the three "Ds" of the students, demands, that is detection of the "foreigners." deletion of their names from the electoral rolls and their eventual dispersal or deportation. The difference only was whether to touch only those who migrated to Assam in and after 1971 or, as the student leaders demanded, to go as far back as 1961. But there are many indications that the students would have accepted 1966 as the cut off date if this compromise had been offered to them, so that those who came from East Pakistan during or immediately after the 1965 India-Pakistan war may not have to be disturbed again. But the opportunity passed because no one took it.

Much has been made of the "practical difficulties" in the way of deporting people once they have come in and settled down. But as recently as 11 April the union government again committed itself in Parliament that "foreigners" of the 1971 and later vintages would be detected and deported. To do the same in the case of persons who have been settled for a few years longer cannot be that much more difficult, though for other reasons it is open to doubt whether the government will stick to this commitment either.

Similarly, when lack of time for negotiations was felt because President's Rule could not be continued under the Constitution, a sufficient number of opposition MPs committed themselves to enabling the gov

'We are ready for action'



Balbir Sandhu in Guru Nanak Niwas: keeping a sharp eye

The lock on the door is deceptive. ■ For, in the room (number 32) which lies beyond the locked door at the Guru Nanak Niwas in Amritsar's Golden Temple, one of the foremost protagonists of the Khalistan movement, Balbir Sandhu, the self styled secretary general of the National Council of Khalistan (of which Dr Jagjit Singh Chauhan is the president) has been camping along with three of his associates for the last three years. As you enter the room you cannot miss noticing a huge poster proclaiming. "No one gives you power, you attain power with your own strength."

Mr Sandhu, who is believed to be the main adviser to the militant Akali leader Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, whom he meets almost every day has not been out of Guru Nanak Niwas even once in last five months. Incidentally, Bhindranwale has also taken shelter in the Guru Nanak Niwas to evade a possible arrest. Behind the smiling face and a soft voice Mr Sandhu has a suspicious mind. He does not believe anybody; not even the Akali leaders. He made this clear when he said that he was keeping a sharp eye on the movements of the Akali leaders based in the adjoining building. Says he: "When we think that any of them is trying to leave the battlefield, we will not let him leave.`

Mr Sandhu is convinced that the Sikhs will sever the tongue of any Akali Dal member who dares to oppose the idea of Khalistan. Indeed, he thought, the movement for an independent Sikh state would further intensify 'very soon.' He also claims that today every Akali Dal leader who goes up on the dais.

shouts: "Raj kareyga khalsa (the khalsas will rule)," but when he gets down from the platform his vested interests get the better of his self-respect and his lips thereafter, are sealed. This, he adds, is being tolerated today but will not be when the fight begins in earnest.

Frequently pointing towards the adjacent building housing the Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee office where Sant Harchand Singh Longowal lives, the Khalistan leader says "we do not want to expose them just now from our platform. Sant Longowal is carrying on the struggle on the right lines at present and in the future they will either fight directly or try and run away."

Mr Sandhu insists that the one lakh Sikh volunteers, who would be taking the oath by 12 May, are all enlisting to fight for Sikh independence. "Today they might say something else but in their hearts they are positive that they are pledging themselves to a separate Sikh nation," he adds.

Pointing again towards Sant Longowal's office Mr Sandhu says, "and if they do not make them fight we will". He is in favour of giving the volunteers military training but at the moment it is for the Akali Dal to decide, he adds.

He insists that training does not mean educating the people as Sant Longowal maintains but training "is for action, it is to get the people ready." Mr Sandhu says that over 50 per cent of the volunteers are youths and eventually they will be trained "by us" for attaining "freedom".

Seema Mustafa



Assam: 'Tribal tury was stirred up in a way no one had bargamed for.'

ernment to amend the Constitution so that negotiations may be continued. Their only stipulation was that the amendment would apply only to Assam and only for a year. The government rejected this opportunity on the strange and I suspect dishonest ground that the opposition was not unanimous in making the offer.

Now turn to Punjab, and it offers a mirror image. At one point, in mid-November last year, an agreement was evolved in talks with Akalı negotiators and was committed to paper. The draft was to be flown to Amritsar the next morning for the signature of the Akalı Dal president. The union home secretary, the principal secretary to the Prime Minister and an IAF plane were asked to stand by. But hours before their departure "someone"—no one says who—inserted a new clause into the diaft, giving Mrs Gandhi the power of final decision in case of disagreement at any subsequent stage. The Akalis refused to accept this unilateral interpolation, the draft collapsed, the Akali morcha at Asiad and the Harvana chief minister's counter measures followed-one move more foolish than the other-and the steady march to disaster was re-

Even now the real differences are very narrow, but the tactics remain divisive. The government has announced acceptance of most of the religious demands of the Akalis, but

by choosing a platform of known dissidents for making the announcement it has annoyed instead of placating the real leadership of the Akali Dal. It is agreed that the Akalis have some just territorial demands but agreement is held up over the disposition of a few dozen villages, when what is in the other scale of the balance is the fate of the whole of north-western India, just as the fate of the whole of north-eastern India has been put in the scales against the fortunes of a few hundred thousand illegal immigrants. It is agreed that the river waters dispute should go to a tribunal. It is not being sent there because some marginal interim claims of Haryana are said to be at stake even though everyone knows that these claims will have practical relevance when a link canal is completed about two years hence, and that gives time enough to the tribunal to reach its decisions about all claims; yet this small hitch is being allowed to hold up the whole issue.

The government alone is not to blame for all this. The Akalis have a responsibility too, as also have the student leaders of Assam. The responsibility of the opposition parties is even greater. They are only interested in exploiting the situation in the two states for their own electroal or other advantages. They, no less than the government, the Assam students and the Akalis, are ignoring what is the central and overriding fact of the two situations. The

Assamese and the Akalis are not only bitter about the government and are not getting alienated from the Congress(I) alone, which the opposition parties might shortsightedly welcome. They are getting bitter about and alienated from the whole of India, and that fact has very dangerous possibilities because Punjab and Assam are the two most critical border states

Whatever the responsibilities of others, why is the government itself playing with this fire? There are many possible answers to this question, each more disturbing than the other. However, these can stand over for later examination. My present purpose is only to emphasise that these games are more dangerous than we realise. We are prone to suspecting that some "foreign hand" is manipulating events to disrupt India's integrity, to "Bulkanise" us as we said from the housetops in a recent fit of hysteria induced by the highest people in the government. But we are the foreign hand ourselves, and no one is doing more to Balkanise us than we are doing ourselves by the way we are intensifving our problems and stoking up our fires for the sake of very petty personal and party interests. We will only have ourselves to blame if an invader from the north-east or the north-west finds us to be not only a fruit ripe for the plucking but sliced up and peeled, ready to be swallowed without any effort.



Awind &

ASSAM: Another long, hot summer

With violence taking its toll almost every day, peace in the troubled state of Assam appears as elusive as ever. The installation of the Congress(I) government has hardly made any difference so far. INDRANIL BANERJIE after a tour of some of the recent trouble-spots and discussions with a cross-section of people in Assam reports the worst is not yet over.

hatever little hope there was of an early end to racial and communal flare-ups in Assam, was shattered abruptly when reports of large-scale incidents of arson and violence in Kokrajhar subdivision of Goalpara district began pouring into the offices of the state secretariat at Dispur, the capital of Assam, from the morning of 5 April. From the initial reports it was clear that several villages under Sidli and Kokrajhar police stations had been set ablaze and the army had been called in to control the situation. But the details of the happenings were to emerge only in subsequent days, when the young superintendent of police (Goalpara district), Mr Ashok Sahu. began sending his despatches.

At about 11 pm on 4 April, the predominantly immigrant Muslim populace of Mojabari, Fulguri and Deulguri villages (Kokrajhar subdivision) were taken by surprise as the peace of the cool Assam night was suddenly rent with war cries, sounds of gun shots and exploding crackers. Within minutes the villages, one by one, were engulfed by a 2000-strong mob of armed Rajbangshis, an aboriginal warrior community which has been supporting the agitation, carrying flaming torches. As the villagers ran helter-skelter into the safety of paddy fields and wasteland, they could see flames leaping from their huts into the night. The terrified villagers hid in the cover of darkness, while the attacking mob left to burn other adjoining villages. Before dawn another five villages (including Bengali Hindu villages), Joraigaon, Nalbari, Tilapara, Kachutola and Kulchakati, had been set ablaze.

During the day more villages were to burn, with the immigrant Muslim villagers in the area determined to resist any attack on them and even counter attack, if necessary. Between 11 am and 3 pm on 5 April, Pakhriguri, Chautaki and Badhapara villages were set on fire, rendering another 120 Bengali Muslim and Hindu families homeless. At Chautaki village 22 Rajbangshi houses were 28 .

also burnt.

The DC and the SP, Mr Sahu, who rushed to the area from Dhubri (district headquarters) intercepted a mob at Kalipukhri village, arresting three Rajbangshi attackers in the process. Later in the evening, on receiving news that a Muslim village Bhumki, was being attacked, the DC and SP along with a police party arrived at the spot only to be attacked by the Rajbangshis with handbombs and .12-bore guns. "It was getting dark but we returned fire and chased the attackers," said Mr Sahu. One Rajbangshi carrying a handbomb was killed and several others injured. Mr Sahu was struck by the fact that the Rajbangshi attackers were retreating in army fashion and picking up the injured wherever possible. "Six injured Ra-

jbangshis were admitted to the local hospital only the next day and that too because they were in serious conditions," Mr Sahu added.

While returning to Kokrajhar town, the police party found another mob attacking Beniguri, a Rajbangshi village. They opened fire killing one Muslim on the spot and injuring another six. Of the 90 huts at Beniguri only 15 could be burnt due to the intervention of the police. But it was obvious that the situation was threatening to get out of control with no community in the area willing to take things lying down. Accordingly, one army column was requisitioned that night from Bongaigaon.

But the most heinous incident in all the events in Kokrajhar took place the next day with even the army unable to prevent it, when

Patrolling a disturbed village: police under strain



Rajbangshis, suspected to be from Beniguri village, attacked the market at Salakaathi. A 12-year old Muslim boy and an old man who had taken shelter in the bazar mosque were stabbed to death while inside the mosque. The boy's body had 12 stab wounds, said Mr Zaharul Islam, a senior minister in the Saikia cabinet. "Only the Muslim part of the bazar was burnt," pointed out Mr Islam. The two fire tenders at the Assam Electricity Board thermal power plant were summoned while the bazar was burning but none came. This incident appears to have enraged the local immigrant Muslim population, felt Mr Islam, and even the Muslims from the riverine areas of the Brahmaputra began coming in hordes to attack Assamese and Rabangshi villages on subsequent days.

The violent incidents that took place after the 6 April events is a record of a series of confrontations between these two communities. The areas under Sidli, Kokrajhar and Chapar police stations were declared disturbed areas under the Assam Disturbed Area Act (1955) and Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, which meant the army could take any action, including shooting

at sight.

But all this did not prevent arson at Palaskandi, Bhabanipur Noonmati, Harakata, Tukrabandha, Balakerkhal, Mohisbathan, Chakchaka, Samariapara Paikhandhara and several other villages between 8 and 10 April. The administration was forced to play a purely firefighting role with forces being rushed to areas as and when reports of disturbances were being received.

The involvement of the Rajbangshis in this spell of violence shook
the state administration since Rajbangshis are the dominant ethnic
group in the state armed police and
also traditional recruits for the Indian army. Six of the Rajbangshis
arrested during the troubled days in
Kokrajhar were army jawans on
leave; another Assam police havildar
arrested had .303 rifles and 12-bore
guns in his possession, while another
dismissed constable was arrested
from near Salakaathi.

According to intelligence reports, about a dozen armed police personnel who had deserted ranks after the 16 February shootout at Goalpara where several CRPF jawans were killed by the Assam police, are believed to have taken part in the violence. Over the days, the police and the army unearthed large quantities of arms from several Rajbangshi villages during combing opera-

tions.

The police are convinced it is the local school and college teachers who instigated the simple Rajbangshi villagers to attack Muslim villages. Three arrested Rajbangshis interviewed by this correspondent at the Basugaon lockup had similar

How non-violent is the AASU?

This is not the first time we have got direct proof of AASU's involvement in violence in the state," remarked a senior government official, when questioned about the authenticity of the documents shown by the Assam chief minister, Mr Hiteswar Saikia, to corroborate his charge that the AASU and the AAGSP were involved in the election disturbances. "We have umpteen documents proving their complicity, if not leadership in the disturbances," he said.

The first inklings of AASU and AAGSP determination to scuttle the 1983 Assembly elections were felt when the police accidentally unearthed a short term and long term AASU plan aimed at thwarting the elections by violent means, if necessary, soon after the dissolution of the state Assembly in March 1982. The plan included measures by the AASU volunteer corps to broaden its mass base and enlist

support in the rural areas.

The intelligence branch got their next big break on 25 January this year when they raided the Students' Day Home, Gauhati University, where a secret joint session of AASU and Khasi Students' Union was in progress. A warning notice issued by the so-called "Death Squad" along with a plan entitled "Nirbachan Protirodhar Karjyya Bybastha" (action plan to resist elections) were seized.

The action plan contained the following violent programmes: • to set fire to polling booths, vehi-

cles and houses of traitors;

to disrupt communications by felling trees, destroying bridges

and cutting portions of roads;
 to prevent rail movement by indirect action such as removal of rail tracks, fish plates etc.;

 to harass employees engaged in election work by threatening them.

The other extremist suborganisations like the Asom
Jatiyabadi Dal (AJD) and the Purbanchalia Loka Parishad (PLP) had
already expressed their militant
attitude by announcing their determination to stall the elections at
any cost. The AASU/AAGSP had
also openly declared in New Delhi
after the breakdown of negotiations that they would plunge the
state into a blood bath and teach
the central government a lesson,
the official said.

According to him, the agitationsist tried to scuttle the elections first by assaulting, intimidating, kidnapping and even murdering persons involved in the elections; as diversionary tactics they tried burning government buildings; finally, they started attacking minority pockets in remote areas to execute their plan of forcible deportation of foreigners. The police intercepted a letter from an organisation calling itself "Bharatiya Krantikari Parishad" addressed to Prafulla Kumar (Phukan). From the contents of this letter it appears that the organisation had attempted to incite mass terrorism and annihilate loyal officers and Congressmen by bringing about a Lebanon type of situation in Assam.

Many senior officials are convinced that AASU/AAGSP will continue with their violent action programmes. For one, they still do not recognise the present state government; besides, they organised a bandh on the very day of the installation of the Saikia ministry. Many officials, some of them holding fairly senior positions, also are reported to have discreetly boycotted the swearing in ceremony.

Some senior ministers of the Saikia ministry acknowledged that not only is the state bureaucracy heavily infiltrated by proagitationsts but there are also pro-AASU/AAGSP elements in the Congress(I) itself. In the latest round of discussions between central and state ministers held in New Delhi recently, it has been decided that the pro-agitationists within the government would slowly be isolated so that action against them could be taken at a propitious moment.

The intelligence reports proving direct AASU/AAGSP involvement in the disturbances in Assam have been gathering dust for reasons that suggest official complicity with the agitation, commented a minister. "There is no doubt that the AASU/AAGSP has been running a parallel government which holds 'peoples' courts,' imposes fines and 'arrests' anti-agitationists," he added.

The decision of AASU/AAGSP to call off the movement temporarily till 15 Aprilwas a ploy, felt both ministers and government officials. The students do not want to lose another academic year and have been pressing for early examinations; if the situation cools down temporarily then the Government can offer no justification for not holding the examinations. Secondly, the Rangila Bihu festival is held in mid-April and this is a time when AASU/AAGSP can enlist funds for their movement and give public speeches supporting their movement.

The passage of time leaves behind poem's in stone



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"We were told that a fine of Rs 10 would be imposed on the person who did not take part in action against Muslim and other encroachers on our land," said Nojan Roy, one of the arrested Rajbangshis from Simlaguri village. When the village bell rang on the evening of 4 April all male villagers above the age of 17 assembled with bows and other arms. Collecting other villagers, Nojan Roy's villagers started attacking targeted villages one by one, finishing the next morning and that too only because security forces had arrived to prevent them.

By the time the situation in Kokrajhar subdivision calmed down, at least 22 persons, 17 of the them Muslims, had been killed in group clashes and police firings. Another 17,000 persons, 11,000 among them Muslims, had become homeless. Armed Muslims from the riverine areas attacked Hapapara and Islamali villages, which have a mixed Bengali, Assamese and Rajbangshi population, on 10 April, the official pointed out. At Noonmati, too, Muslim attackers burnt houses indiscriminately

Whatever else the events in Kok-rajhar subdivision implied, it drove home the growing realisation that there could be no permanent peace in Assam as long as the antagonism between the different communities was not resolved. Of the approximately 3.1 lakh persons who had become refugees by mid-March, less than half had been able to return; even the principal advisor on relief and rehabilitation to the Assam government, Mr P.H. Trivedi, admitted that "short of reconciliation among the communities, other measures to ensure rehabilitation will not prove effective." Containing the situation indefinitely by the use of state power in the form of the army, CRPF and other security forces could not be the solution in the long term. All communities in Assam could at best be partially disarmed and disturbances quashed as and when they arose. But sometime or the other security forces would have to be pulled out.

As it is, the strain on the state armed police was beginning to tell with growing numbers of officers being suspended or dismissed due to lack of initiative in tackling disturbances. In Kokrajhar subdivision itself six police officers, including an assistant SP, were dismissed for failing to respond quickly to the disturbances beginning from 4 April. This move has further demoralised the police force, said a senior police



CM Hiteswar Saikia: getting tough

official.

The state administration is also dreading the onset of the monsoons in early June. Only 508 out of the 1,600-odd bridges destroyed in the election disturbances have been permanently restored; once the rains descend and the rivers swell, the mobility of security forces would be seriously hampered, said a senior police official. At that time the administration will find itself almost totally ineffective in controlling any violence in the interior villages that might arise.

The other option in the circumstances would be to bring about an immediate political settlement among the different antagonistic groups in the state. This would, however, require the resolution of the inherent contradictions in the socio-ethnic set up as it presently stands.

The political scenario in Assam today has certain remarkable parallels with the situation that prevailed in West Bengal in 1972: in both cases, politicians swearing allegiance to New Delhi were foisted to power through dubious elections at a time when the stability of the state was in grave jeopardy. If New Delhi is attempting another anti-Naxalite type operation in Assam, it would be logical to expect a massive crackdown on the pro-agitationists in the state by the security forces aided by the Congress(I) strongmen.

"We just need another three months and then we will finish the agitationists," a senior minister in the Saikia ministry told this correspondent privately. What the Saikia government needs now is justification for a massive crackdown against the agitationists who have largely succeeded in presenting a nonviolent image. Secondly, the government wants to isolate the agitationists as much as possible so that the chances of success of any operation launched against them will be good.

The Assam chief minister, Mr Hiteswar Saikia, appears to have fired his first salvo against the agitationists on 10 April. Summoning a

press conference, the chief minister for the first time accused the agitationists, the AASU and AAGSP, to be directly involved in the unprecedented violence that swept Assum immediately before, during and after the elections. Mr Saikia defended his accusations by producing documents seized by the police from the residence of the two AASU boys killed in a bomb explosion in south Sarania in Gauhati. Among the seized documents were several drawings of complicated electronic circuits for detonators and it seems the bomb blast that killed the two boys was caused by the explosion of a powerful bomb they themselves were making. "It should be obvious to any one that the boys themselves were making the bomb. Is it possible that some Bengalis could plant such a powerful bomb under their very bed?" said an intelligence officer.

Another document found listed the names of 197 volunteers trained for fomenting trouble in rural areas and helping villagers attack those of the 'foreigners'. Another pamphlet listing strategies for attacking villages and police stations was also found along with a map showing all police stations and outposts in the state. "We will remove the myth that the AASU is non-violent," said an intelligence officer (See box).

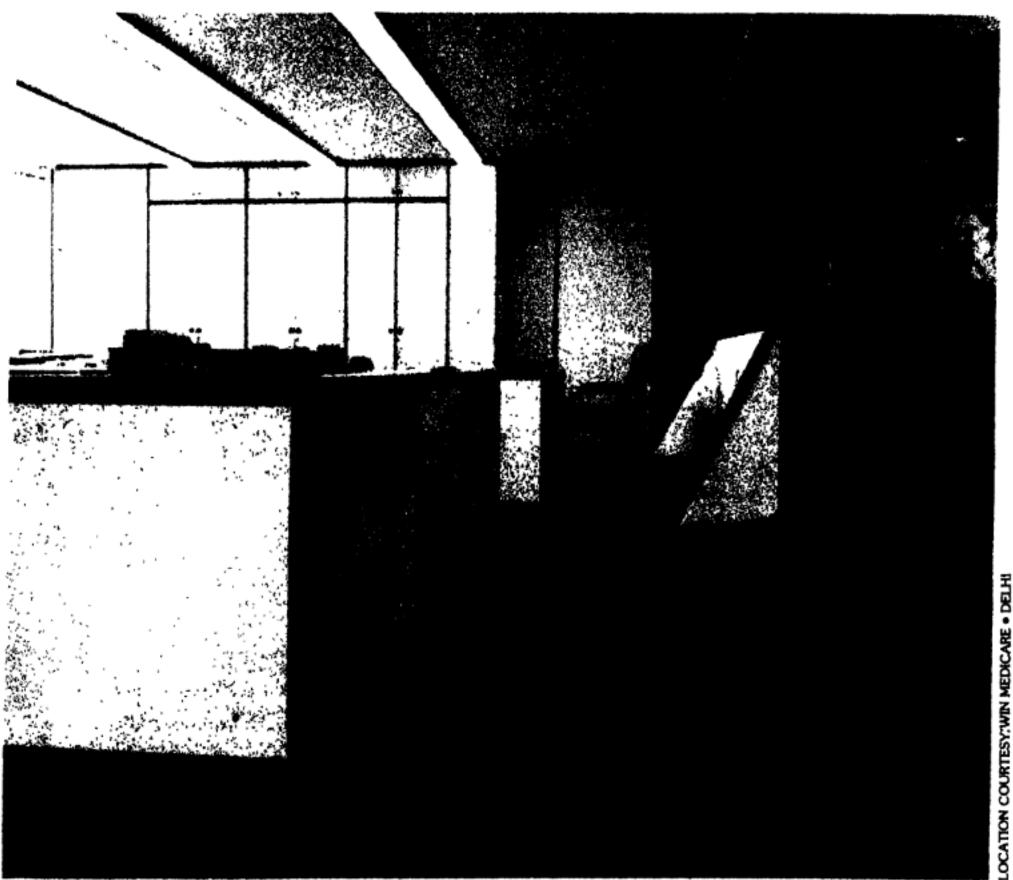
Meanwhile, the election disturbances in Assam have already begun to isolate the AASU and the AAGSP. Not only had all Bengalis become vehemently opposed to the agitationists but so had other communities. The Bodos and the plains tribals had detached themselves from the antiforeigners movement and had issued public statements withdrawing support from the AASU and AAGSP. Most Muslims, too, were convinced that the agitationists were communal since it was the Muslim population in the state that bore the brunt of the violence.

The most dramatic signs of disenchantment with the way AASU and AAGSP were functioning was reflected with the first voicing of dissidence from within the AASU itself. In a meeting convened by the AASU vice-president, Mr Nurul Hussein, at the B. Barooah College in Gauhati on 11 April, it was decided that unless the AASU high command issued a public statement denouncing the BJP and the RSS for spreading communal violence in Assam, the Musmembers of AASU would lim resign.

The chief of the AASU volunteer force, Mr Joynath Sarma, and AASU advisor, Mr Nagen Sarma, were accused of belonging to the BJP-RSS communal combine. These persons along with their supporters should also be immediately expelled from the AASU, the Muslim members decided at the meeting. Their ultimatum has been delivered and it remains to be seen what happens next.

31

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130 olankiya Tala, kilometres from Jodhpur in Rajasthan, presents a desolate picture. Miles of parched land, with not a patch of greenery stretches out into the horizon. Not a drop of water has fallen from the clouds for the last five years. Silhoueted against the evening sky one sees groups of people with pitchers walking in search

It is this wasteland that the state government has selected for a vigorous family planning drive. Parched humans and cattle wait for their turn near a tank fed by tubewell water. On the tank is painted the ironic reminder Parivar par rok na lagaasi, dangar dangar pyassa jaasi (if you do not check the growth of your family, the cattle will go thirsty). Here man and cattle wait motionless for their turn, their eyes glued to the thin dribble of water.

The government is busy trying to pass off about 100 starvation deaths which occurred between 2 February and 11 March in the Solankiya Tala village of Jodhpur as "59 deaths due to a mystery illness." No effort is spared to convince the people that everything is working well. One of the techniques used by the Rajasthan government to add credibility to its claim was to send a medical team under Dr Gouri Shankar, a chest specialist, to the village.

According to a news report Dr Shankar led a medical team, to the village to ascertain the real cause of the large number of deaths. To give it credibility, the team was sent by

the Rajasthan Patrika which incidentally is a pro-government newspaper. Dr Shankar returned from Solankiya Tala to announce, in almost the same words as the Rajasthan health minister, Mr Khet Singh Rathore, that the deaths were caused by a mysterious illness which has still not been identified. While the cause was still under investigation he was positive that the people had not died of starvation or even malnutrition as all the victims, according to Dr Shankar, belonged to "prosperous families." The team also ruled out broncho-pneumonia as the cause of the deaths as had been officially announced earlier.

Either Dr Shankar is lying or the two doctors temporarily posted at the village who said that the people had died of broncho-pneumonia, are lying. Or, they are all incompetent. Finally, it could be that the villagers who spoke of five years of a 'horrifying drought' are lying.

Dr Shankar referred to 'prosperous' families in Solankiva Tala. This reflects his insensitivity. I visited this very poor village which even the Jodhpur district collector Mr S. D. Srivastava, overcoming his bureaucratic hesitancy, described as such and did not come across even a single "well-to-do" family. I met some villagers who, unlike the rest of the 8,000 people there, are still able to eat two square meals a day because they have means of income other than agriculture or animal hus bandry which have been nonexistent in the five years of drought. These people are either living on old

SPECIAL REPORT

Starvatio in Raja

SEEMA MUSTAFA toured the sunb in Jodhpur district of Rajasthan to re about 100 starvation deaths had

supplies of food, or have relatives working in other states who send them money, or are employed in regular service with the government. These 'prosperous' people who still have a little food to eat, form 15 per cent of the village population. No deaths have occurred in the houses. The village sarpanch Mr Narpat Singh is one of them. No one has died in his house. The village patwari is another 'prosperous' person. No one in his family has died either. They, instead, speak of deaths in poor, famished houses where the men have not been able to find work to support their families.

The different and callous village doctors insisted (this was before the senior chest specialist had visited the village) that the people were dying of bronchitis and pneumonia

Hungry villagers collecting the poisonous fruit Toomba: face to face with death

n deaths sthan

ked expanse of Solankiya Tala ort that inspite of official denials. we occurred in this village

> and ruled out starvation totally. "There is nothing unusual," they said. "Old men and children have died and they would have died anyway." Mr Srivastava, again to give him some credit, admitted that the deaths were far from normal.

> The villagers speak of years of hardship, of an existence that defies imagination, of a fight to resist the advancing desert which is turning crops into sand, and killing people and cattle. Politicians have not bothered to visit Solankiva Tala, not even the health minister Mr Rathore who represents the Shergarh Assembly constituency where this village lies. Mr Rathore who has been most vocal in denying the starvation deaths maintains a farm near Solankiya Tala and valuable water from tubewells has been diverted to

irrigate it, and it is the only patch of green agricultural land in the desert today.

The sheep are eating wet mud near the water tank. There is not a blade of grass left on the ground or an edible leaf on the trees. All that remains, dotting the otherwise barren landscape, is a poisonous plant secreting a white liquid which can blind if it touches the eye. Then there is a wild fruit toomba very bitter and fairly poisonous which the villagers have begun eating in the absence of food. Mehta Ram, to whom we gave a lift, said that one of his eyes had been affected since he began eating this fruit. Mehta Ram was returning after collecting Rs 16 for 15 days of work. The labourer is entitled to a minimum wage of Rs seven in this region. But this, say the district authorities, is linked to the completion of a specific task. Needless to say the petty contractor supervising the work cuts wages at will.

At Jodhpur no one believes us when we say that the villagers are eating the wild fruit toomba. At Solankiya Tala village the people refer to this fruit as the dividing line between life and death. Not one but several villagers say that they eat the seeds of this fruit when nothing else is available. In the magnificence and comfort of the Non-Aligned Summit in Delhi every foreign delegate was given a voucher of Rs 5,000 for food during his or her stay in the capital. A budget of Rs 30 crores was earmarked for this international extravaganza as against a niggardly Rs

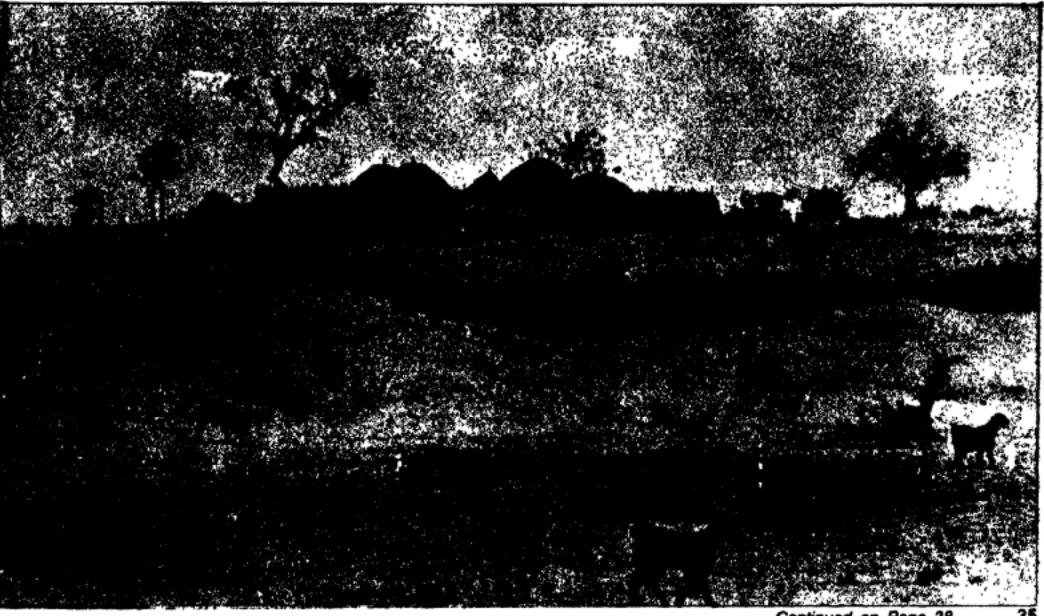
3.5 crores for relief for a drought affected population of 11.5 lakhs in the district.

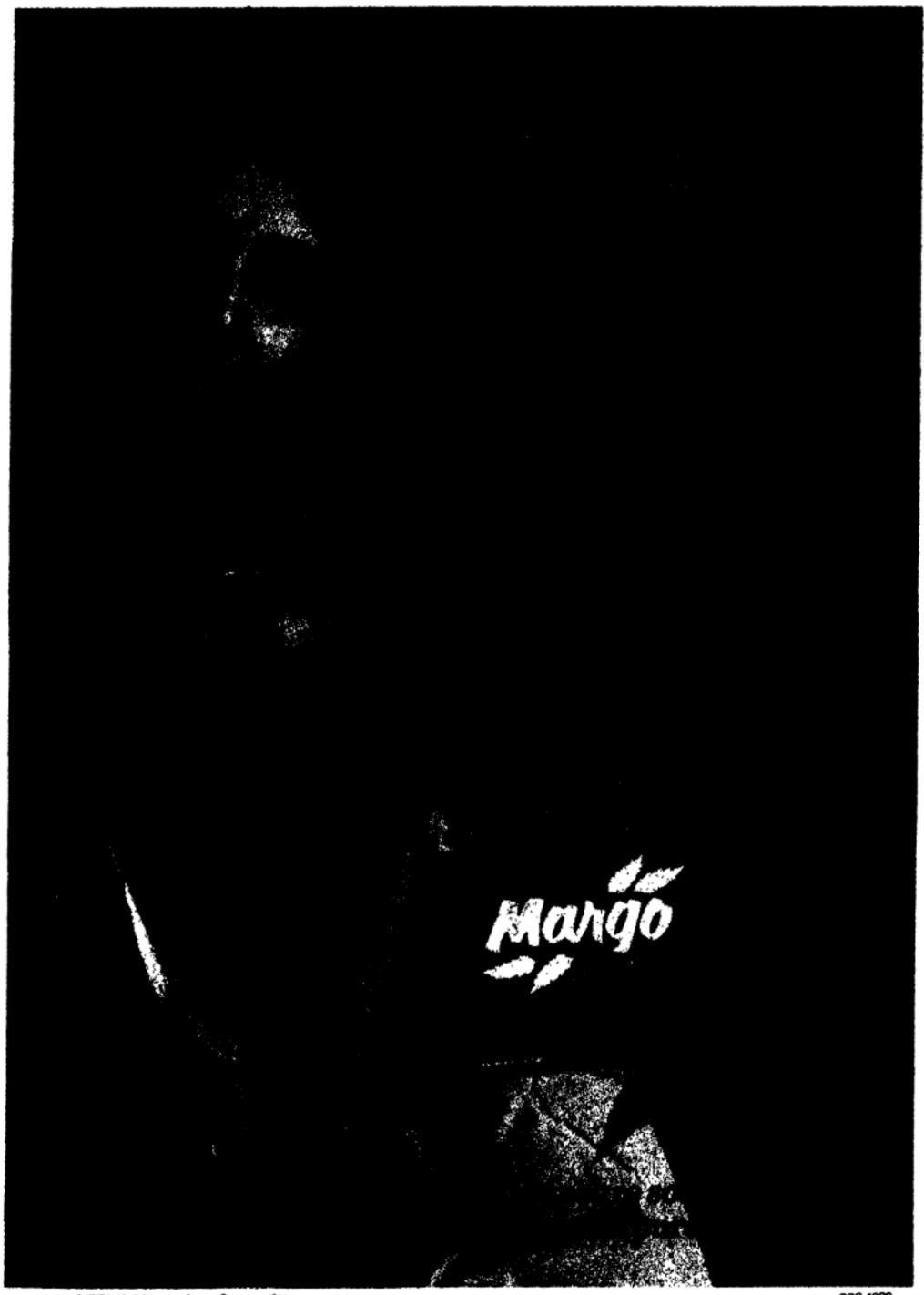
The population of Solankiya Tala has no other means of livelihood now except government help. Govern-ment help in the form of unrealistic, niggardly drought relief schemes which give employment at best to one lakh people "during the peak season." At Solankiya Tala village 200 people were so employed but in view of the deteriorating conditions the collector sanctioned work for 400 more people. There are about 5,000 able-bodied men and women in the village alone waiting for employment. But as helpless Mr Srivastava exclaimed, "there are so many Solankiya Talas here. Why, in Shergarh tehsil alone there are eight to ten such villages. Tell me what can I do?"

But are the people dying of starvation to blame for this? Is Jimu whose husband died, to blame for this? Or Poona Ram whose wife and three children died? Or the 59 others who were listed in official records as having died of a "mystery disease," or the over 100 who died, according to unofficial sources? They died of a severe winter, without adequate food and clothing when a common cold turned into pneumonia, a cough into deadly bronchitis, a fever into continuous vomiting.

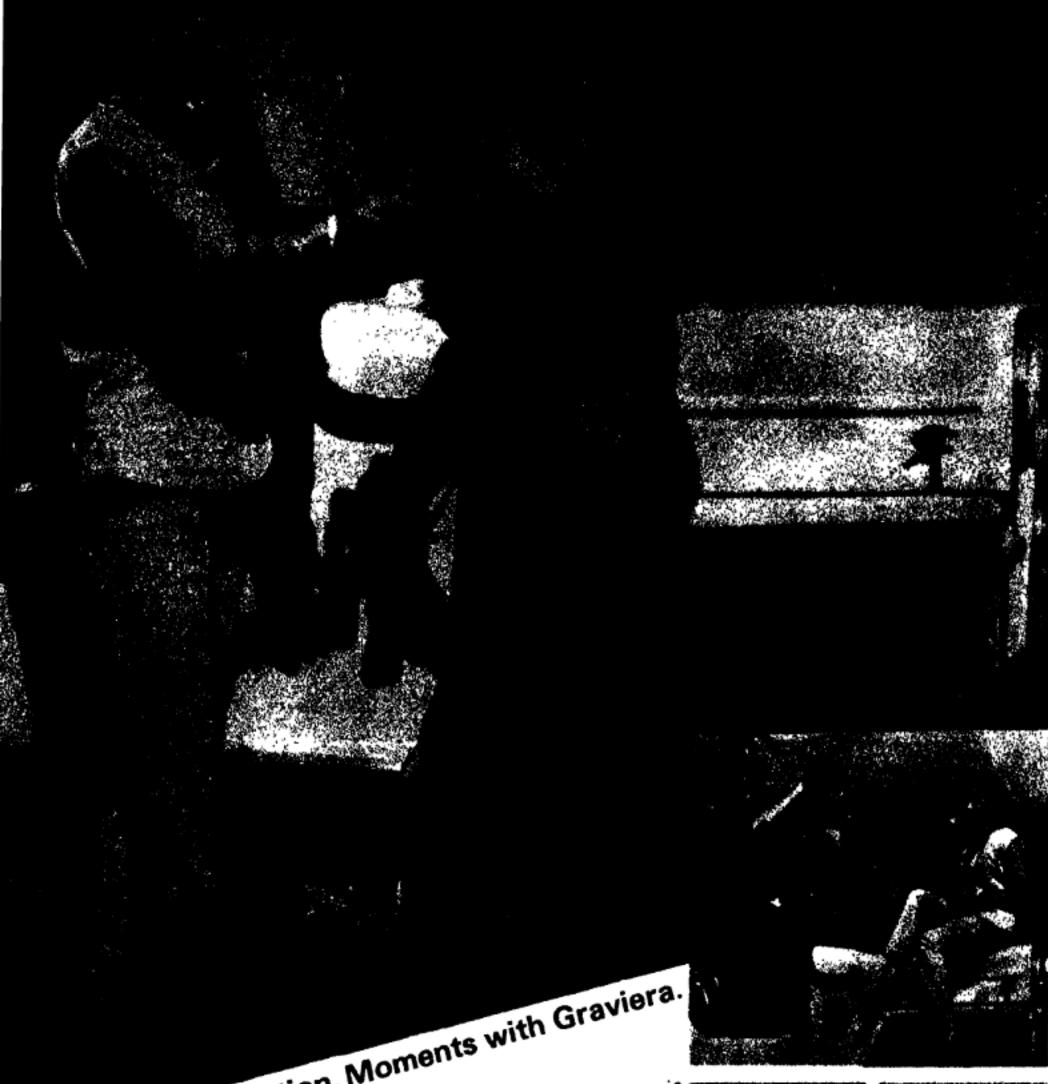
The district officials insist that the villagers did not bother to seek medical aid. "These people are not interested in getting treatment," Mr Srivastava said. What he and the others did not add was that the

The sunbaked expanse of Solankiya Tala village: niggardly relief





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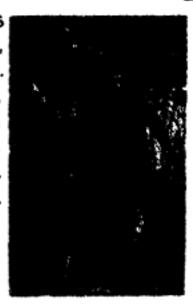
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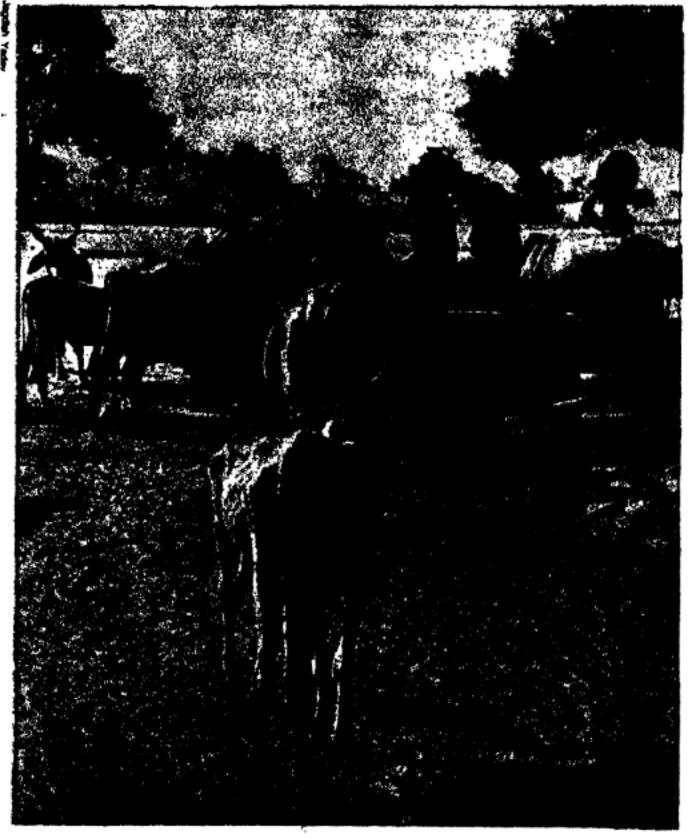
You look good in them.







Deag cattle strewn along the roadside: death everywhere



Human beings and cattle fight for the last drops of water in a tank

nearest dispensary was a good 12 kms away from Solankiya Tala. And as Jimu pointed out, it was not medical aid that was required but a wholesome meal and an assurance of food for the days to come.

Jimu is left with four young children to support. Her husband Harmonan Das once grew enough to feed the family and more, on his few bighas of land. Since then he tried to obtain work as a labourer but there were too many claimants and too few jobs. Harmohan Das, a brahmin, then began begging for alms. Verylittle was available from the huts in the vicinity. His wife does not speak of the fever but of days without food. She paints a horrifying picture, between sobs, of an existence no human being in a free country should be subjected to.

It is a similar story hut after hut no food, no water, no medicines, death... The agonising details spread over five blazing summers, cold winters and rain showers so spaced out that they served only to burn the crops and not mature them.

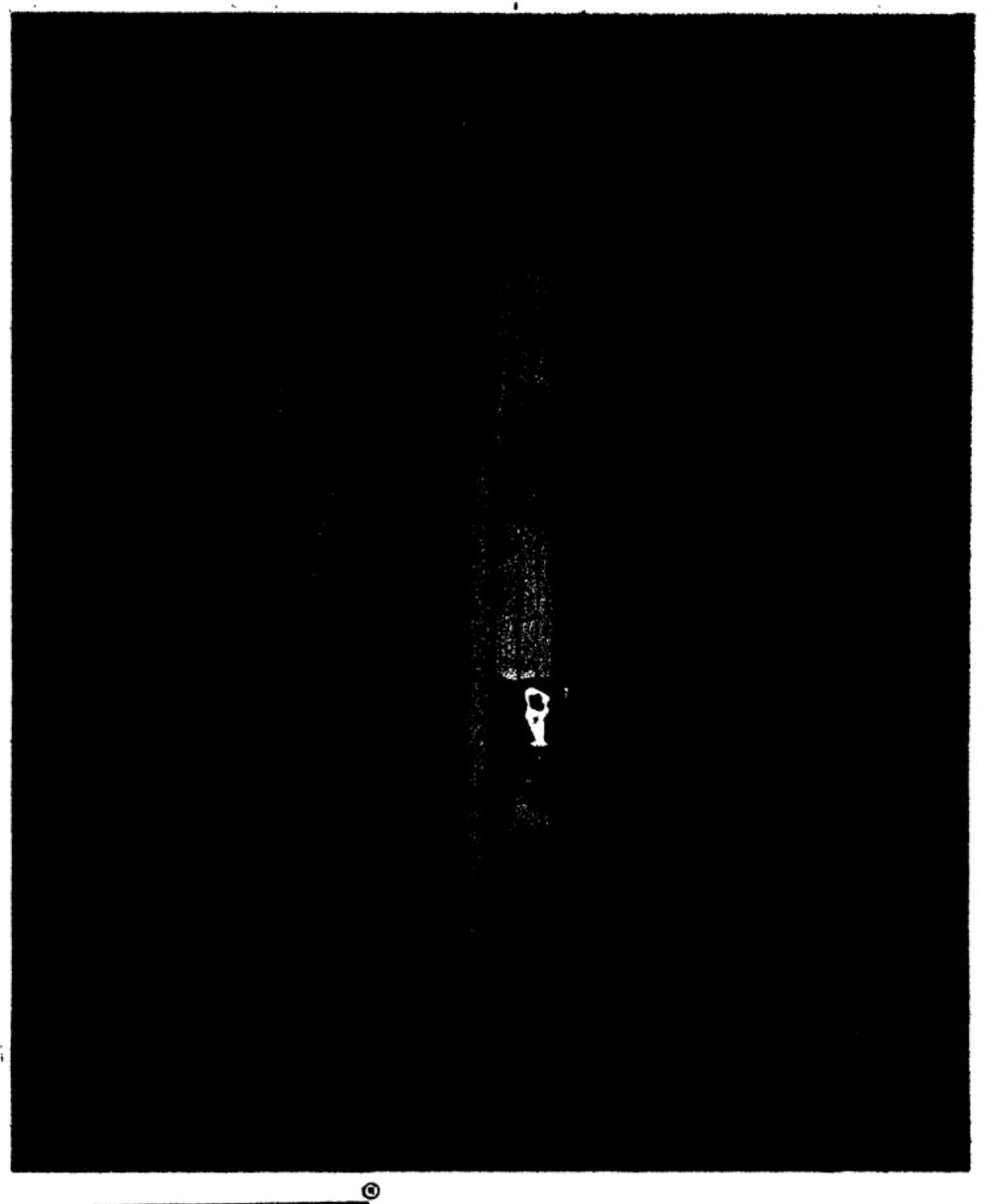
Shergarh and Bhadoli are the two worst affected tehsils of the district. They have a combined population of 4.5 lakhs of which over two lakhs are adults. The government ceiling for the month of March under the labour-oriented drought relief schemes is for 35,000 people only. Mr Srivastava said that the condition was so alarming that he had, at his own initiative, increased the ceiling to 45,000.

At Solankiya Tala 70 per cent of the dead are elders over 60 years of age and children under 10 years. There are villagers lying ill in every other hut but medical aid is available only to those well enough to come down to the hospital functioning from the local school. In fact, while we were standing talking to villagers at the hospital, a man came up asking for the jeep to be sent to fetch his mother who was very ill. The doctor refused on the plea that there was no petrol in the jeep and that the man should arrange for his own transport.

There is no governmental proposal to generate other means of livelihood and shift the emphasis from agriculture and animal husbandry to say, small scale industries. The government, like the poor illiterate villagers, remains dependent on the

elusive monsoons.

Solankiya Tala attracted attention only because of the high incidence of deaths, within five weeks. After the hue and cry dies down and the government, aided and abetted by people like Dr Gouri Shankar, has succeeded in convincing the Vidhan Sabha and the Parliament that the people died of a 'mystery illness' and not starvation. The attention will be diverted from the proud, wiry people of Solankiya Tala fighting to survive to more important happenings in Delhi. .



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The genius of Tippoo Sultan

On 4 May 1799, Tippoo Sultan, the last Maharaja of Mysore, died fighting the British at his fort capital of Seringapatam. AKHILESH MITHAL traces the versatility of Tippoo's genius which made him unique among the other emperors of his time.

When India wins freedom This earth will be ours And the blue sky above We shall honour the martyrs And throng their graves At each anniversary Of their great sacrifice

(Shaheedoan kay mazaaroan pur lugayngay hur burus maylay jub upnee hee zumeen hoagee aur upnaa aasman hoagaa.)

his song was sung with great fervour during the last phase of the struggle for freedom. Those who climbed the gallows and suffered torture and incarceration were sustained by the sentiment of such songs.

An independent India should honour both those who struggled to keep it free and those who delivered it from bondage. Amongst those who fought to keep it free from British conquest, Tippoo Sultan occupies the pride of place. He died fighting on 4 May 1799 at the fort capital of Seringapatam. He alone had challenged and fought the rapacious white ogre and paid the price of defeat with his life. He was buried in the Gumbaz on 5 May 1799. These two days, 4 and 5 May, should be observed as the anniversary of the martyrdom of Tippoo Sultan in Karnataka and the whole of India. At the point where he fell a fountain should be installed as in our tradition the dead are made offerings of water. His grave should be refurbished each year with new carpets, coverlets and canopies. Brilliant chandeliers should be provided to light up the tomb. A cavalry regiment which has distinguished itself in post independence battles should be singled out for the award of tiger striped standards modelled on Tipoo Sultan's proud flag to show that we remember that his light horse was as good as any in the world of his times.

The British came as traders in 1600 to the richest country in the world. When they left in 1947 India was pitifully poor and devoid of people with experience of running either military or civil affairs at the decision making level. Trade and indus-

try were in British hands and the Indians had neither experience nor skills.

The rot had set in during the eighteenth century. The defeat suffered by the emperor Muhammad Shah in 1739 shattered the fabric of the empire. Governors declared themselves independent in the east and the south. The European trading companies took advantage of the situation and with superior military technology defeated the armies of the Nawabs. One reverse was usually enough for these initially Delhiappointed and subsequently selfproclaimed rulers. Their hollowness is pictured in a verse of Shaikh Qalandar Bakhsh 'Jurrat' (d. 1809):

No one should be taken in by their titles of lordship

for the British hold the keys to

their gilded cages And whatever they are taught they

repeat parrotlike for they (the rulers of India) are like the talking mynah birds of

Bengal (Sumjhay na ameer unkoa na koaee wazeer

Angreyzoan kay haath ik qafas mayn hayn aseer

Joa kuchh woa purhaay soa woh



munh say boaleyn

Bungaalay kee meynaa heyn yeh

poorab kay ameer.)

Tippoo Sultan affords a refreshing contrast to his peers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He was highly educated and his military exploits show the excellence of his training. What needs to be known better is the versatility of his genius. His revenue administration and encouragement of agriculture and trade made Mysore the richest state in India. His cultivated taste is shown by the gracious Darya Daulat garden and Palace, by the Gumbaz and his interest in innovation in gardening and horticulture by the Lal Bagh gardens.

Tippoo's coinage has a rare beauty of fabric, texture and design. The coinage struck at the same time by the East India Company for Shah Alam is by comparison commonplace

and uninspired.

Tippoo Sultan had assembled a fabulous library most of which was burnt by the British. Two thousand volumes saved from the fire were taken to Calcutta and found their way to Britain including Aurangzeb Alamgir's copy of the Quran. The treasury of jewels was looted and dispersed. Tippoo's jewelled arm hands alone fetched a sum which ensured a yearly income of £2000 to the Briton who looted them. His throne was of gold. "The central part of the canopy was surmounted by a most curious and costly figure of the Huma formed of solid gold nearly the size of a pigeon and covered over with the most fabulous jewellery, its back being one large and beautiful emerald, its eyes being two brilliant diamonds, the tail resembling that of a peacock studded with jewels, the whole so arranged as to imitate the most dazzling plumage and so closely set that the gold was scarcely visible." The throne was cannibalised and the bird sent to the Queen of England. The total loot may be judged from the £1,42,902 share given to General Harris as being one-eighth of the cash found.

The riches of Tippoo arose from the wealth of the prosperous and well administered state ruled by

him. He was the first adherent of state trading. Sandalwood, gold, black pepper, tobacco, elephants, and coconuts were bought and sold by the state which was the sole exporter of these products. The industries he started included watches, cutlery, hour glasses and scientific instruments besides all the weapons needed for war (cannon, guns, scimitars, rockets, gunpowder, etc.). Hundreds of foreign technicians were recruited to man these factories. Silk worms were imported from the Island of Diraz near Muscat along with men who knew how to rear them. He planted mulberry trees and the famed silks of Mysore

owe their origin to him.

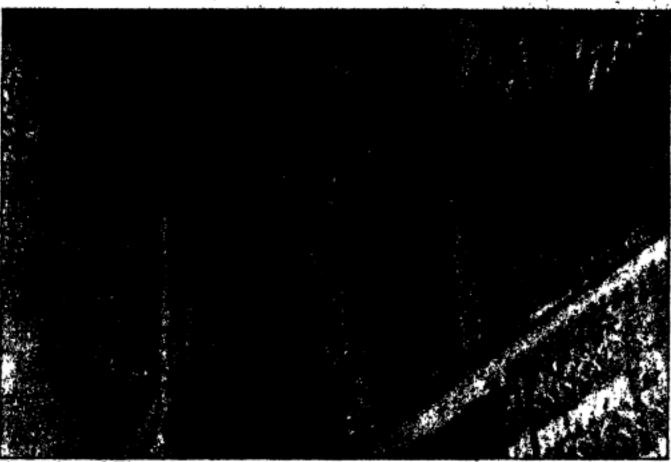
As the British have vilified Tippoo, it is necessary to recall the examples of his tolerance and generosity to other religions. There was no *jaziyah* or poll tax on non-Muslims. The civil list of Mysore bristles with Hindu names. Hindu temples were given encouragement and support. The ravages suffered by the Shringeri Math at the hands of the Marathas were made good by the munificence of Tippoo. He wrote to the Jagatguru, "You are the Jagatguru. You are always performing penance in order that the whole world may prosper and the people may be happy. Please pray to God for the increase of our prosperity. In whatever country holy personages like you may reside, that country will flourish..." Tippoo's silver and gold gifts can still be seen at the Narayanswami temple, the Srivenkatesvara temple at Nanjagud and at the Sri Rangnath temple at Seringapatam. The most remarkable of all is the 'Padshah Linga' of green jade installed at the Nanjundesvara temple at the behest of Tippoo Sultan.

The manner in which Tippoo Sultan died brings to mind a verse of

Faiz Ahmad 'Faiz':

This life which is given to you And taken away How can it—living be of any significance What matters is the manner in which you face death For that glory lives for ever more (Jis dhuj say koi maqtal ko gayaa woh shaan salaamat rehtee hay yeh jaan toa aanee jaanee hay is jaan ki koai baat naheen)

In 1799, 4 May was particularly inauspicious. The day itself was a Saturday (Shaniwaar -the day of Saturn) and the night to follow was moonless(Amaavasya). The astrologers sensed disaster and foretold a hard and brutal day followed by a pitiless night. They advised the Sultan to propitiate Saturn (Shani) and he gave money and cloth to the poor. An elephant, a bag of black oilseeds and sikka worth Rs 200 were given to the chief priest of Chennapatna. Other brahmins were given a variety of black objects including an iron pot full of oil and coins, buffaloes, caps and jackets of cloth. Tippoo bent



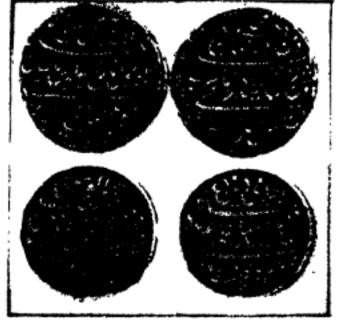
A section of Tippoo's summer palace displays architectural excellence

over to see his own reflection in the oil of the iron pot before making the gift as this act propitiates the malefic Saturn (Shani).

Having thus rendered their due to the stars, Tippoo rode back to his aerie on the ramparts of beleaguered Seringapatam. He was at his noonday meal when disaster struck. A loval, devoted and able commander of 18 years' service, Syed Ghaffar, was killed by a cannon ball. The British had stormed the walls and were pouring into the fort. Tippoo rode to the spot, dismounted and fought the rising tide shoulder-toshoulder with his soldiers. His bravery was infectious and a stubborn resistance ensued. The resistance could not continue as the defending Mysoreans were fighting guns with swords. Their magazine had exploded when a lucky shot from the besiegers landed red hot in the gunpowder stack.

Seeing the position lost at the breach, Tippoo remounted and rode to the Water Gate. Here the fighting was still on and Tippoo joined his

Tippoo's coinage had a rare beauty (above) compared to the uninspired and commonplace coins issued by the East India Company (below)



forces. His horse was soon killed from under him and three wounds including gunshot in the chest disabled him. He was moved into a palanquin. A loyal attendant, Raja Khan, advised surrender. Tippoo refused. At this point a party of British soldiers arrived, intent on looting the defeated. A hand stretched out to grab the jewelled belt Tippoo wore. Tippoo, weak with the loss of blood and despairing because of the defeat, was still the tiger. His sword flashed for one last time before a gunshot into the temple stilled him.

No one in the palace nor yet the victorious British knew that the mighty Tippoo had fallen. British soldiers were celebrating victory by indulging in an orgy of loot and arson. Senior officers were apprehensive about Tippoo Sultan's whereabouts and plans. A major was sent with a white flag to the palace. He promised safety and honour to the royal family if they surrendered and demanded audience with Tippoo Sultan. The prince, Mohiuddin, assured the major that his father was

not in the palace.

It was after a fruitless search of the palace that the commander of the fort (killedar), Nadim Khan gave the information that Tippoo lay dead at the Water Gate. Night had fallen when Arthur Wellesley Jater Duke of Wellington took a search party with torches to the Water Gate. The flares revealed a mass of corpses lying in heaps of mangled flesh and congealed blood. Each body had to be examined. They first found Raja Khan mortally wounded. He pointed to the body of his late master. "He had four wounds, three in the body and one in the temple, the ball having entered a little above the ear and lodged in the cheek. He had an appearance of dignity or perhaps sternness in his countenance which denoted him above the common order of people."

41



конирфя

And me two airpotents will over: or the same



Can Rajiv Gandhi be accepted as the people's leader?

o Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the grandson of Jawaharlal Nehru, the son of Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi, the MP from Amethi and the AICC(I) general secretary has added yet another feather to his cap. In an obvious attempt to project him as the second most important leader in the countrynext only to Mrs Gandhi—the youth Congress(I) with a lot of fanfare proclaimed Mr Gandhi the leader of the country's youth. Nobody was surprised. The pattern is all too familiar by now. It was in the same manner that the late Sanjay Gandhi was sought to be projected as the most suitable successor to Mrs Gandhi.

The opposition leaders may have a point when they say that inspite of all the image building exercises being carried out, presumably with the blessings of Mrs Gandhi, the chances of Rajiv Gandhi succeeding her as the next Prime Minister of India are not as bright as it is being made out to be. According to them, despite his claim that pilots make good leaders, Rajiv is not cut to be the PM. For another, his success-or failure-is inexorably linked with the future of Mrs Gandhi. And Mrs Gandhi is facing troubled times. But then, neither Mrs Gandhi nor the sycophants surrounding Rajiv Gandhi are likely to give up the hope that Rajiv Gandhi may succeed Mrs Gandhi. So the charade continues.

Rajiv, of course, has certain good qualities in him and I for one do not agree with those who tend to dismiss him as a "good for nothing" who lives well, loves all the good things in life, and is a misfit in Indian politics. At the same time he hardly looks like the prototype of the Indian youth-a frustrated, impatient and angry lot-let alone be their leader. He is a quiet person and thinks a lot before taking any action. Under normal circumstances this should have been a qualification for a politician. But in the Indian context, where people want results quickly, Rajiv is certainly placed at a disadvantage. His brother Sanjay who was a go-getter, was, perhaps, better suited for the role Mrs Gandhi wants her son to play.

This is particularly important as it is by now common knowledge that it is the frustrated youths who are providing the teeth to most of the violent agitations in the coun-



By BARUN SENGUPTA

try, including the Akali movement in Punjab and the AASU movement in Assam. Can Rajiv win these youths over and bring them within the Congress(I) fold? Given the background, the nature and the temperament of Mr Gandhi, it hardly looks possible. He can at best carry fairly well-settled middle class or upper middle class youths with him. But these youths can hardly be called a force of any reckoning either in size or for their influence with the people. And a proclamation cannot make a tiger



Rajiv Gandhi hardly looks like the prototype of the Indian youth—a frustrated, impatient and angry lot—let alone be their leader. He is a quiet person and thinks a lot before taking any action.

out of a paper-tiger.

Whether Rajiv can step into Mrs Gandhi's shoes will largely depend on which course the country's politics takes. At present, the country's politics provides a very bleak scenario. Whether in Punjab or in Assam it is mainly a determined minority which is holding the silent majority at ransom. For instance, the municipal elections in Delhi have clearly demonstrated that a large number of Sikhs have no sympathy for the violent Akali movement. In the same way, many Assamese speaking leaders expressed their displeasure about the AASU movement by contesting the general election braving the threats from the agitation leaders. But in both the cases, the determined minority could have its way. This is particularly ominous for the

If Mrs Gandhi gives in either to the Akalis or the AASU, she is bound to encourage others to come out from the wings and launch similar movements. Punjab, especially, could be the most crucial test in her career. There has not been much flutter in Delhi even after more than 3,000 people were killed in Assam. But Punjab can be a different proposition altogether. For, Punjab is too close to Delhi. The tremors of any serious trouble in Punjab can rock Delhi. And this can adversely affect Rajiv's pros-

pects.

In a troubled political scenario Rajiv will certainly find it more difficult to be accepted as the successor to Mrs Gandhi. He is yet to prove that he is capable of tackling difficult problems—or situations. If Rajiv had faced the crisis in Punjab or Assam on his own and come up with a solution he would have certainly gained in stature. But he has been rather assiduously keeping himself away from delicate issues and difficult problems. This has naturally reinforced the belief that Mrs Gandhi does not want her son to dabble with explosive issues. Her reasons could be: either, in her assessment Rajiv is not sufficiently mature to handle such situations, or he is not capable of facing such situations. Whatever be her reasons, by protecting Rajiv from political exposure Mrs Gandhi cannot expect her son to rise in the esteem of the general masses of the country. And no amount of proclamations can give him an image which does not exist.

How Churchill tried to stop self-government in India

In the fourth part of his five-part article on Mahatma Gandhi and the freedom struggle, MADHU LIMAYE recounts how Churchill was against the reconciliatory posture adopted by Lord Irwin and how the Tory party leader tried desperately to deny Gandhiji's claim to self-government.

he most Christian Viceroy used all the weapons in the armory of a repressive regime to crush the Congress movement Along with the leaders, thousands of peaceful satvagrahis were put behind prison bars. The morale of Congressmen was high But a dark shadow tell across the political scene. The Round Table Conference scheduled to meet in London in October 1930 met without Congress participation. The Round Table gesture looked hollow It was like enacting Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. A pall of gloom enveloped both the moderate Indian opinion as well as the realists in the British administrative machine. The publication of the obsolete Simon Report filled Irwin with despair. The receipt of a telegram from the Conservative leader Stanley Baldwin, sent under pressure from the diehard wing of the Tory Party, made the Viceroy impatient, "It really makes me weep to think that in a matter like this kind

Kripalani at the Ramgarh Congress

tient. "It really makes me weep to and Wedgwood Benn wer think that in a matter like this kind He poured ridicule on all Sardar Patel (extreme left), Mahatma Gandhi and Acharya J.B.

Baldwin should submit his judge ment to the diehards." About the Baldwin telegram Irwin spoke in unusually strong language in his let ter to the secretary of state

"It really makes my blood boil that people with mentality like that, not knowing the ABC of the problem as you and I have to deal with it, should have such capacities for making mischief." (Lord Irwin, Letters to the Secretary of State for India, p. 187).

Churchill speaks

During this period Churchill assumed the leadership of the resistence group that formed itself to block resolutely India's progress towards self-government. He became the idol of the diehards and took upon himself the main responsibility of retrieving the situation from the "disastrous course" on which Irwin and Wedgwood Benn were launched. He poured ridicule on all attempts at

reconciliation. Churchill roared:
"It is therefore become nec

"It is, therefore, become necessary in order that this landslide of opinion should not lead to undue disappointment, that the basic facts should be restated in unmistakable terms The British nation has, we believe, no intention whatever of relinquishing effectual control of Indian life and progress. The Round Table Conference now sitting has no power to frame a Constitution for India. No agreement reached at the Conference will be binding in any degree, morally or legally, upon Parliament." (Speeches of Winston Churchill, p. 4935).

The charge about British dishonesty whichLinlithgowwasto make later was based on solid evidence. Churchill's speech is a case in point.

The Viceroy, however, was not much influenced by this ceaseless barrage of criticism nor by the resistence within the Anglo-Indian circles in India. He lent his sympathetic ears to the mediation efforts of Sapru and Jayakar. He prepared the way for release of Gandhiji with "skill and tact" through a speech to the Central Legislative Assembly on 7 January 1931. He acknowledged that no one can fail to recognise the "spiritual force which impels Mr Gandhi to count no sacrifice too great in the cause...of the India he loves...Is it not now possible, I would ask, for those responsible for this policy to try another course ...?" (Speeches by Lord Irwin, Vol. II, p.

This paved the way for the release of Mahatma Gandhi and the working Committee members. The historic talks between Gandhiji and the Viceroy for calling off the civil disobedience movement, to enable the Congress to participate in the Round Table Conference, took place in Delhi.

The significance of this development was neither lost on Churchill nor on the Indian people. In a debate held in the House of Commons on 12 March 1931, he publicly parted company with his leader Baldwin. This was a "turning point" for thelleaders, and Churchill resigned from the Conservative front bench to start his crusade against Indian self-



government. In his own perverse way Churchill was not slow to grasp the significance of Gandhi's non-violent movement:

"When Mr Gandhi went to the seashore a year ago to make sait was not looking for salt, he was ng for trouble. He was lookmeans of flouting the ing . govern. and compelling them to arrest him 'ow he has compelled the government to recognise the propriety of his action. He has elevated his deliberately selected breach of the law into a trophy of victory, the significance of which, believe me, will be appreciated from the Himalayas to Ceylon." (Speeches of Winston Churchill, p. 4994).

Churchill expressed his sense of disgust with the weak-kneed policy of Irwin in his forceful and pictures-

que language!

"In my opinion we ought to dissociate ourselves in the most public and formal manner from any complicity in the weak, wrongheaded and most unfortunate administration of India by the socialists and by the Viceroy acting upon their responsibility. It is alarming and also nauseating to see Mr Gandhi, a seditious Middle Temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type wellknown in the East, striding halfnaked up the steps of the Viceregal palace, while he is still organising and conducting a defiant campaign of civil disobedience, to parley on equal terms with representatives of the King-Emperor. Such a spectacle can only increase the unrest in India and the danger to which white people there are exposed. It can only encourage all the forces which are hostile to British authority. What good can possibly come of such extraordinary negotiations? Gandhi has said within the last few weeks that he demanded the substance of independence, though he kindly adds that the British may keep the shadow. He declares that the boycott of foreign cloth must be continued until either prohibition or a prohibitive tariff can be put up against it by an Indian national Parliament. This, if accepted, would entail the final ruin of Lancashire. He has also pressed for the repudiation of the Indian loans, and has laid claim to the control of the Army and foreign affairs. These are his well-known aims. Surely they form a strange basis for heart-toheart discussion-"Sweet" we are. told they were...between the malignant subversive fanatic and the Viceroy of India. Churchill's speech of 23 February 1931 explaining his resignation from the Conservative opposition front bench to his constituency (Ibid, pp. 4985-6).

Significance of Gandhi -Irwin Pact

Churchill correctly assessed the long term effect of the Gandhi-Irwin pact. Later on, other viceroys contested Candhiji's interpretation of the terms of the pact. Whether Willingdon or Linlithgow they might succeed in temporarily suppressing Gandhiji and his movement by bringing to bear the full panoply of their imperial powers. But now this would not produce any lasting result. What had been done could not be undone. Hereafter the frail Gandhi and the mighty British empire could hope to settle the festering quarrel only on a basis of equality. Rightly did Winston Churchill say of the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement:

"The price, however, is heavy, and it must be examined. Although the boycott and civil disobedience have been partially called off, they remain suspended over us and can be loosed at any moment by the mere lifting of Mr Gandhi's little finger. The violation of the Salt Law was specially selected by Mr Gandhi a year ago as the means of defying the government of India, as the one means of defying the government of India which would be most deeply and widely comprehended throughout the land. His lawless act has now been made lawful. Anyone may now make salt from the sea." (Ibid, 4993 italics

Churchill thought that the apologetic attitude of Lord Irwin and the series of steps taken by him:

"...ought to be preserved as a patent prescription for building up the reputation of a political opponent, or rather of a revolu-

Frontier Gandhi, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and Mahatma Gandhi



tionary leader. By this most elaborate process undertaken, no doubt, at each stage, from the highest and most well-meaning motives, Mr Gandhi and Congress have been raised before the eyes of hundreds of millions as the champions of Indian nationalism against the white intruder, and, henceforward, they are the dominant and recognised power with whom we have immediately to deal. They have been raised to a towering pedestal of fame and eminence in the eyes of all disloyal elements in India as having inflicted upon the mighty government on whose functionary the safety of the whole country depends, such humiliation and defiance as has not been known since the British first trod the soil of India.... Gandhi has become the symbol and the almost godlike champion of all those forces which are now working for our exclusion from India." (Ibid, p.4995)

Winston Churchill now proclaimed from the house top that he was against the policy of "surrender" to the nationalist movement. He declared himself against the conversations and agreements between the Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi. He was not wrong in thinking that Gandhi wanted the expulsion of British from India. He was also right in his belief that Gandhi stood for the permanent exclusion of the British textiles from India. He was not far wrong in holding that already the young Nehru was preparing to "supersede" him in the leadership of the country. But Churchill was not right in describing Nehru as Gandhiji's rival. The young Nehru would succeed Gandhi with his consent and encouragement. And the great Tory leader was completely wrong in thinking that his crusading zeal would be able to reverse the course

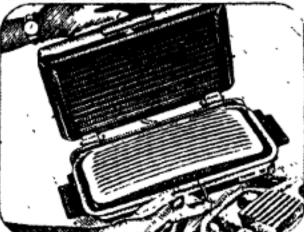
of history.

Churchill accused Gandhi of trying to substitute brahmin domination for British rule in India. This was not Gandhiji's intention. Nobody did more to awaken the innate power of rural India and of the depressed classes. It was largely because of him that they secured the right of franchise and a share in legislative power. Churchill had no appreciation for Gandhiji. Bitterly did he denounce those who held parleys with this fakir. With unconcealed distaste he felt constrained to acknowledge that Gandhi had "deep knowledge of the Indian people" (Ibid, p.5012). The willingness of the princes, he was prescient in holding, "to enter a federal Parliament" was largely due to the belief now "spreading so widely throughout the masses of India" that the "British Raj will shortly cease to exist" and in the face of this they had "to provide for themselves and the states under the new regime." (Ibid, pp. 4952).

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LOOKING GLASS

Delhi Cloth Mills: Swraj Paul's next target?



Paul: base in India?

Swraj Paul, the Londonbased Indian tycoon has developed an interest in the Delhi Cloth Mills and may soon acquire its shares, reportedly, through Harish Bhasin, leading Delhi stock broker and president of the Delhi stock exchange. The Bharat Ram family, which controls DCM with about 12 per cent of the shares, has naturally started panicking because together with the new incentives for foreign investors and his clout at 1 Safdarjung

Road, Mr Paul is a potential threat. Their problem is further compounded by infightings within the family which has apparently reached a breaking point and could further weaken their position. If the tinancial institutions, which hold a bulk of the shares, decide to, or are forced to back Mr Paul, the Bharat Ram family

could lose its hold over the company.

In itself this is no pig deal—companies frequently change hands. But DCM could become a test case not only for the soundness of the government's new policy to encourage non-resident investments but also for the role of financial institutions in company takeovers. According to business circles, Mr Paul has already acquired enough DCM shares to make a bid for the management. Some believe that, if Mr Paul wants to, he will succeed in taking over the company. But one thing is clear. The financial institutions, still recovering from the shock of how the chairman of the Industrial Development Bank of India Mr N. N. Pai was unceremoniously fired, are at the moment, treading softly on the takeover path. Any pressure on the financial institutions, from the Paul lobby in Delhi. would not go unnoticed and will bring an avalanche of criticism upon the government from industrial circles.

Assam Rifles may take over charge of north-east's security

The union home ministry is considering a proposal to rejuvenate the Assam Rifles which has been stagnating at its strength of 21 battalions since 1968 and give it a more effective role in border defence and counterinsurgency operations in the northeast. Both the defence and the home ministries feel that the army has been over used in the insurgency plagued northeast and that a single para military outfit should takeover the overall charge of internal security in the region Both the ministries are unanimous that the 148-yearold Assam Rifles would fit the bill since it has detailed knowledge of the treacherous terrain as well as of tribal life. A proposal has also been mooted to shift the army's Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School (CIJWS) at Vairengte, a hill township on the northern tip of Mizoram to a 300-acre sparsely populated North Cachar hill station. Haflong. The reputation of the CIJWS as a counter-insurgency school has spread far and wide. The school is now finding it difficult to train the increasing number of battalions in their preinduction courses at its present site.

20 6 8 Miles

Step-motherly treatment to certain public sector units

The step-motherly treatment being meted out to certain public sector establishments is becoming increasingly glaring. The Reserve Bank of India, the State Bank of India, the Overseas Communication Services and the Shipping Corporation of India, to name a few, spend crores of rupees for their top executives to live in luxury. The legend in the stock exchange towers in Dalal Street in Bombay is that the floors from the 15th upwards is very posh. The reason: The Reserve Bank of India has taken over those floors. On the other hand the buildings which house the General Post office and other 'lesser' organisations are neglected. The working environment of the ill-paid staff of such organisations is pathetic and even the new communications minister Mr V N. Gadgil does not bother to inspect the GPO during his frequent visits to Bombay, his predilections being for airconditioned exchanges Today the postal staff in Bombay do not even have proper uniforms. In contrast, the RBI's peons are 'dressed to kill' in their summer and winter unitorms

Jaspal Singh decides to fight

There are indications that the controversial police official of Baroda, Mr Jaspal Singh whose transfer led to bloody riots last December, is preparing for a last ditch stand against the state government. The director of the anti-corruption bureau, Mr Majbutsinhji Jadeja, has been asked to look into the causes of the riots and to find out if Mr Jaspal Singh discharged his duty, in keeping with his position. Though a court recently upheld the state government's right to transfer him, Jaspal Singh is in no mood to give up and is reported, to have sent a letter to Mr Jadeja challenging the legal validity of the inquiry.

Sathe's remark enrages Vidarbha MLAs

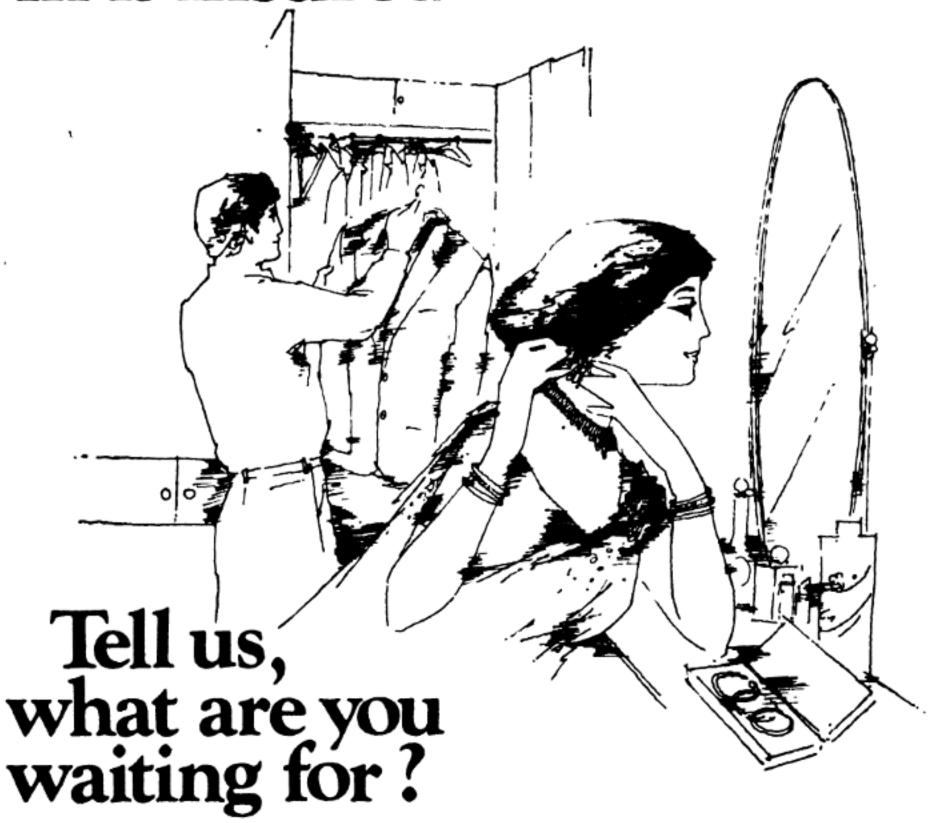
The opposition and ruling party legislators from Vidarbha are up in arms against the union minister for fertilisers. Mr Vasant Sathe for re fering to them as "useless" and accusing them of neglecting the problems of Vidaibha once they became ministers The legislators have thrown the same allegation back at Mr Sathe. accusing him of never having projected Vidat.



Sathe: concern tor Vidarbha?

bha's problems in Parliament. He failed to get a gas based petrochemical unit in Vidaibha or even a wagon manufacturing centre at Badnera. The legislators claim that they have succeeded in getting educational and medical facilities for Vidarbha. Mr Sathe who hails from Vidarbha is probably feeling left out of the growing momentum of the movement by Vidarbha legislators for development of the area.

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JAMMU AND KASHMIR ELECTIONS

A testing time for Dr Abdullah

Will the National Conference maintain its hold in the Valley?

Srinagar: Kashmir today is a mix of forces: communalists, power-hungry orators, money-hungry businessmen and genuine nationalists. It is these forces that the political parties will either have to align with or fight, when the state goes to the polls early next month. But above all, it will be a test for the state's young chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah. For, this, in effect, will be his first electoral battle without the Sheikh's presence. It will also be a mandate for his chief ministership.

In the state today, there are nine political forces which have decided to jump into the electoral fray separately—the National Conference (NC), the Congress(I), the BJP, the Janata Party, the Lck Dal, the Jamaat-i-Islami, the People's Conference, the Awami Action Committee (of Mirwaiz Moulvi Farooq) and the state Panther Party (led by Mr Bhim Singh). Attempts at having an electoral understanding with the Congress(I) having failed, it is very likely that the National Conference will whip up anti-centre sentiments to gather support. Already, it has ordered cassette recordings of some selected speeches of the late Sheikh which are to be played during the election campaign. Among these is the Sheikh's most controversial speech during his last days, delivered on Martyrs' Day in 1981, wherein he criticised India for her "designs to enslave" Kashmiri Muslims. "Whether it is India or Pakistan, or Indira Gandhi or Gen Zia, we will never bow or submit to any of these," he had said. Reportedly, there are even plans to circulate, in the Valley, copies of the Lion of Kashmir's will. In his will Sheikh Abdullah had appealed to the people to defend the "fort of the National Conference" as only this party could defend the interests of the Kashmiris. On 9 April this year, Farooq Abdullah asked the people to return the National Conference to power, "lest they faced another spell of Congress(I) misrule."

But it may not be totally smooth sailing for the National Conference. The party has its share of problems too. Dr Abdullah's success will also depend upon the unity among the NC leaders. Dissidents in the NC include Dr Abdullah's brother-in-law—who was a claimant to the chief ministership of Jammu and Kash-

mir—and a number of hardliners who have been opposed to the chief minister's friendly overtures to the centre. (Dr Abdullah had campaigned for the Congress-I during the Delhi elections in a bid to woo the Muslims' votes.) However, Begum Abdullah, Sheikh Abdullah's wife, has thrown her lot behind her son and accompanied Farooq Abdullah to Poonch, a gujar-dominated area, where she has considerable influence. She has also reminded the people that her son is only carrying on his late father's task.

The Congress(I) in the state is a house divided. One faction is led by Syed Mir Qasım, a senior Congressman, who was the chief minister of the state in 1975 but stepped down to let Sheikh Abdullah take over, after the finalisation with his accord with Mrs Gandhi. The other faction is led by the PCC(I) chief, Mufti Syed. Syed Mir Qasim would like to have an electoral understanding with the National Conference, so that his party may not suffer the humiliating defeat in Kashmır that it did in 1977. Besides, argue Mir Qasım's men, the Congress(I)'s interests will be better served if the party enters into an arrangement with the National Conference. For, if Dr Abdullah does continue in office with the support of the Congress(1), that itself would act as a restraining factor on the chief mınister. Mrs Gandhi, however, has decided to support Mufti Syed and go it alone in the elections. Consequently, Syed Mir Qasim's group has been isolated from the rest of the

Abdullah: facing problems?



state unit of the party. So much so that Mir Qasim did not even accompany the PM on her recent visit to the state.

The reasons that have been advanced by the Congress(I) for not having an electoral alliance with the National Conference were, firstly, that the latter has acquired "communal overtones" and that its influence is limited to the Kashmir valley. Secondly, the Congress(I) feels that it should not be associated with the National Conference since it (Congress-I) is opposed to the controversial Resettlement Bill passed by the state Assembly and any alliance with the NC would amount to a tacit approval of this Bill.

Meanwhile, the Janata Party, which finished second in 1977 with a tally of 13 seats (11 from the Jammu region and two from the Valley), is today, a shadow of its former self, following its spill at the national level. Most of its members have left the party and joined either the National Conference or the BJP and at the time the Assembly was dissolved by the Governor, there were only two Janata members left. As a result, the BJP has gained in importance in the Hindu-dominated Jammu region. The Jamaat-i-Islami, which came on the political scene by capturing five seats in the 76-member House in 1972, has now increased its

the Muslim pockets in Jammu. Its workers have proceeded quietly in these areas and after the Sheikh's death, its leaders intensifying their activities, openly denounced the state's accession to India.

support in the Kashmir valley and

However, according to some observers, the people of Jammu Kashmir are getting divided along regional and communal lines. While the Congress(1) is confident of winning in the Jammu region with its Hindu majority, members of the National Conference say that it is sure to maintain its hold in the Kashmir valley (it had lost only two seats in the Valley in 1977) and will also improve its position in the Jammu region. Will Dr Abdullah (leader of the party most likely to win the elections), who has maintained a secular image, speaking out against communal elements in the state, ultimately woo votes along communal lines?

A Correspondent

A *sanyasi* now rules the state

Hyderabad: Mr N. T. Rama Rao has always been a colourful figure, more so from the time he ascended the political firmament. But now he is literally one. In a dramatic turn to his political career, NTR decided on 14 April to become a saffron-robed yogic CM. With a saffron angavasthram (shawl slung on the left shoulder) and rudrakshamala that completed the attire of his newfound state, N. T. Rama Rao renounced his family and all worldly pleasures to become a sanyasi. Though he means every word of what he says, it is disconcerting to note that he cannot seal his reservoir of histrionics. On the contrary, it comes bubbling forcefully and naturally to the surface, particularly when in the company of filmland folks. However much NTR may choose to deny it, the fact remains that he cannot (or perhaps he does not want to) sever the umbilical cord that connects him to the celluloid world. For, the saffron-clad NTR sprang this surprise at the state film awards festival at Tirupati.

NTR is a three-dimensional man whose psyche is a fine meshing of religion, politics and drama. As NTR believes with undiluted conviction that a divine pattern exists behind coincidences and conjunctions. He might have derived a great deal of satisfaction from the fact that on 14 April, all the three dimensions of his personality harmonised, almost symbolically as it were. He made known his decision at Tirupati and for NTR, an ardent devotee of Lord Venkateshwara, there could not have been a more sanctified place on earth. It was a function that encompassed the film world, and he was present in his capacity as chief minister. Indeed, it was a sangam of religion, films and politics. What is more, he had chosen to announce his metamorphosis on 14 April, Ugadi,

the Telugu new year's day.
In his powerful emotion-choked voice, NTR said that it was the shocking reports that he had received earlier in the day about certain barbaric acts committed by men (he was referring to the rape of a four-year-old girl by a man well over 50 years) that had compelled him to abjure the world in disgust. He informed the audience, slack-jawed with wonder and amazement, that he had donned kashaya vasthra (saffron robes) after a brief raja pooja, adding, "I am no longer your lustful and gorgeous-looking Rama Rao but a yogic chief minister who has decided to give up everything in his pursuit to root out corruption and



NTR: playing a role?

bring the lost glory back to Andhra." In keeping with the image of an ascetic he has become a vegetarian and for a meat-loving NTR this is indeed a sacrifice.

Rational-minded people would ridicule NTR, who like a magician pulling out one rabbit after another from his hat, evinces a unique flair for coming up with one doltish idea after another. One cannot help wondering if NTR will sit crosslegged in the padmasana pose in future sessions of the Assembly. For all you know, NTR will and what is more, get away with it. If any other chief minister had attempted half the things that NTR has done so far, he would have been ridiculed out of office by now. But as a sanyasi, should he not renounce politics too and head for the hills, meditate on mankind's savagery and bestiality and in course of time attain nirvana? No, for according to NTR, "A saint must rule the state. People should feel that their leader is not attracted by worldy things, that there is a man of dharma at the helm of affairs." Once again NTR revealed his deeprooted conviction that he is but a pawn in the hands of divine powers and when queried on whether his decision was sudden or the outcome of introspection he replied, "God is leading me. He is changing the direction of my life from time to time."

When this correspondent met him at Sriharikota after the launching of SLV-3 on 17 April, NTR was in his sanyasi attire — saffron robes, rudrakasha mala and a dazzling angavasthram with gorgeous mirrorwork. If anything, the new attire enhances NTR's handsomeness. A sacrilegious statement, no doubt.

Anita Pratap

Now, an epic film on Nehru?

Bombay: The Gandhi fever is afflicting people in many and varied ways. Apart from overwhelming and emotional audience responses, filmmakers appear to be set to offer a spate of productions inspired by Sir Richard Attenborough's Gandhi There is talk of a Jinnah film in Pakistan, and the irrepressible I S. Johar threatens to produce four quickie' sequels, one of which is to have the ludicrous title Gandhi meets James Bond. While Johar's claims have been dismissed as an outlandish joke, the news of an American's plan to make a film on Pandit Nehru, with Nasceruddin Shah in the title role, has created a stir.

William Greaves, the American film-maker, was in India early last year and apparently said in an interview with the National Archives of Oral History that he is planning a series of six films on Nehru, each of two hours' duration, primarily for American television. Naseeruddin Shah was mentioned as a possible choice for the Nehru role. Smita Patil and Shabana Azmi were said to be in the running for the role of Indira Gandhi in the film to be made in collaboration with Shyam Benegal.

But at this stage, Greaves' plan does not even appear to be on the drawing board. Benegal, when contacted, said that Greaves had briefly talked about a film on Nehru but nothing concrete had been decided. Amid these private denials came Azmi's public statement that she has nothing to do with Greaves' proposed project.

The Nehru film, from what Greaves has told the Oral Archives, would give a composite picture of the first Prime Minister's life and also inevitably include a good deal of personal detail without which nothing is saleable on American television. Though Greaves has apparently met Mrs Gandhi, the details of that meeting have not been revealed.

Greaves, a black documentary film-maker, who returned to the USA about a month ago, is not expected back here in the near future. Whether the Nehru project ever materialises or not, Greaves' interest is understandable. The idea is not only inspired by the success of Gandhi and subsequent curiosity about India, but probably also influenced by the current popularity of biographical dramas on American television.

Rajni Bakshi

Dada's weakness is Pawar's strength

Bombay: The man happiest about the fierce dissension over the selection of president for the hapless Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee(I)was Mr Sharad Pawar of the Congress(S) who is ever present on the sidelines waiting to capture the chief ministership of the state. Prof. I. S. M. Aseer's choice as MPCC(1) president would have eminently suited Mr Pawar's ambitious designs. Prof. Aseer has no mass base in Aurangabad, nor any organisational capacity. He is not even a taluka leader and has remained a secretary of the Congress Party, which he became when he got his break only after Mrs Gandhi split the Congress.

A weak Congress(I) is a boon to Mr Sharad Pawar who has been literally bombarding rural Maharashtra with his high-powered propaganda techniques. As he says, in the last three months he toured 27 of the 34 districts in the states, visited 230 Assembly constituencies and 110 colleges and two universities, meeting farmers, students, youth groups and people from all sections of society. The situation in Maharashtra in 1985 will be like Andhra Pradesh, he

predicts very confidently. After the presentation of the state budget proposals for 1983-84 by the state finance minister, Mr Sushil Kumar Shinde, the Vidarbha legislators who are the most volatile in the Congress(I) are further convinced that with Mr Patil at the helm of affairs, the worst fears. Vidarbha's neglect have been confirmed Basically in the state's cotton belt, there are still no agro-based industries revolving round this ample cash crop in Vidarbha. As the legislators complained, despite the glut in sugar production, nine new sugar factories have been cleared-most of them already in the thriving sugar belt of western Maharashtra. On the other hand, not a single cotton spinning mill has been cleared. There is a tremendous shortage of yarn in the state. The requirement of the state is 114 spinning mills, each with a 25,000-spindles capacity. The powerloom needs 240 million kg, handlooms 12 million kg. Against this, the availability from the cooperative sector is only 30.16 million kg and from the textile mills sector 12 million kg. The net deficit therefore is 209.84 million kg. The people of Vidarbha feel that Vasantdada is not convincingly putting their needs before the sultans of Delhi as he does in the case of the cooperative sugar factories (to which he is committed).

The state government has also



Pawar, exposing Dada's faults

lacked courage in lobbying for fertiliser plants based on gas from Bombay High. In the state Assembly, Mr. Sharad Pawar said that although Bombay High is in Maharashtra, the state got only one fertiliser plant, Gujarat got two, Rajasthan one and Madhya Pradesh one. The Government of India will spend Rs 800 crores for laying the pipeline for Gujarat's two plants in addition to meeting the continuing expenditure for compressors along the pipeline. This means the price of naphta will be more and therefore the price of fertiliser will increase. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission had, sometime ago set up a committee to assess the feasibility of fertiliser plants in the state and had suggested one each in Ahmednagar, Bidh and Nagpur and five to other states. But ultimately Maharashtra got only one. Gujarat, which also produces its own gas, does not give a single cubic metre to any other state. It is very obvious that decisions are taken on political grounds and not because of economic viability, Mr Sharad Pawar alleged.

Exposing Dada's weakness in dealing with Delhi, Mr Pawar said that today lakhs of rupees worth of gas is being flared when the state has been begging for this gas for its turbines. The state has also given a written undertaking that it will convert its gas turbines to oil when the centre needs the gas in three years. But the centre prefers to burn up this natural waste rather than meet the entire needs of electricity for Maharashtra.

The state's problems are manifold, particularly with the rising hopes and aspirations of the neglected areas and section like the farmers, landless labourers and the drought areas. For instance, of the Rs 1,890 crores pumped into the state by financial institutions, 65 per cent has gone to Bombay, 1.25 per cent to Marathwada, one per cent to Vidarbha and the remaining to the rest of the state. Of the jobs created in the last two years, 81 per cent were created in Bombay-Pune-Thane region.

In this volatile atmosphere, political instability as a result of bitter infighting in the ruling party, will place the state in a position perhaps worse off than it was under Mr A. R. Antulay and Babasaheb Bhosale.

Olga Tellis

CPI(M)'s murder politics

Agartala: The Tripura chief minister Nripen Chakraborty's repeated assurance that he would "protect all people" sounded hollow after his own partymen recently butchered a promising young Congress(1) leader Parim al Saha and his cousin at Bishalgarh only 20 kilometres away from here His brother Motilal Saha escaped atter being struck with a dao. His father Sukhlal Saha was convinced that his son was killed following a conspiracy hatched at the highest echelon of the CPI(M) long back in 1979, "The CPI(M) tried to burn us alive about 18 months back by setting our house on fire" he said

According to Motilal Saha all evidences pointed to the fact that it was a well planned attack. Their neighbour Bhanulal Saha a CPl(M) MLA of Bishalgarh shifted from his house the previous night and many teachers and students of the local higher secondary school did not attend school the day the murder took place. Two houses near where the Saha brothers were ambushed, which were occupied by CPl(M) workers, were also deserted

on that day. The Bishalgarh police station which used to give him a guard refused to provide Parimal Saha a guard on that particular day inspite of

repeated pleadings.

The inspector general of police, Ramendra Bhattacharjya, said that it was a preplanned murder. The chief minister very reluctantly admitted that it was a political murder but refused to identify the party which he thought was responsible. Motilal Saha said that he could identify at least 13 CPI(M) workers who attacked them. People in Bishalgarh whom SUNDAY talked to were of the view that only a CID enquiry would bring out the truth. They recalled that when a CID enquiry into the murder of CPI(M) MLA Gautam Dutta in 1980 revealed that his own partymen were the culprits, the inquiry report was hushed up. Rajmohan Das, a fisherman who hails from Bangladesh said, "Even there I have not seen the type of killings I have seen during the last five years here."

K. C. Choudhuri

A few drops for a water-starved city

Madras: At last Mrs Gandhi's sevenyear-old promise of supplying Krishna water to Madras city has come true. But the modalities of the scheme appear to be so impractical that the hard-bitten citizens here are doubtful of the feasibility of this new scheme. The more discerning ones have called it a political gimmick in which the centre's only intention is to upstage the state government. Admidst much fanfare, the defence minister, Mr. R. Venkataraman, who along with the union railway minister, Mr A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury, had flown all the way from Delhi, released into the city conduits, wagonloads of Krishna water brought all the way from Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh) by southern railways (SR). According to the arrangement, SR will supply three lakh gallons daily in rakes of



Krishna water: blessing or burden?

75 wagons each to the water-starved city.

The central government eked the maximum mileage out of the occasion, with speeches made by the union ministers against a backdrop of banners reminding everyone that

"railways augment metrowater supply." Mr Venkataraman who represents a city constituency thanked Mr Choudhury for this gesture of goodwill and for coming so quickly to save the people from the throes of water scarcity. Mr Choudhury, the star of the occasion, who wallowed in the all-round publicity, described Mrs Gandhi's anguish on seeing a water-starved Madras city when she recently toured the drought-affected spots of Tamil Nadu (although she seems to have gained this insight by speeding through the streets of Madras well after darle). Mr Choudhury claimed that the railways had come to the prompt rescue of the city on her specific instructions. Not a single state minister was present at the function, not because they were piqued (which they definitely were), but because they were not invited.

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The state government is nettled in more ways than one. Although the SR's offer sounds very magnanimous, it has scant effect in mitigating the city's acute water scarcity. The railways are providing 1/150 of the 45 million gallons per day that the metrowater currently supplies every alternate day to the consumers of Madras. A paltry 0.6 per cent. But

Will the son return from Kanakapura?

Bangalore: On 15 April, the Karnataka chief minister, Ramakrishna Hegde, refused to be a chief minister for a few hours. Instead, he was just an ordinary Indian citizen going to file his nomination papers to contest the crucial Kanakapura Assembly seat, the election to which will take place on 15 May. (Kanakapura is about 60 km from this garden city.) There was no fanfare, no police outriders or police patrol vans, no convoy of dozens of vehicles to accompany Mr Hegde. The chief minister, along with his family members and cabinet colleagues, went in only three vans to Kanakapura.

At 9.00 in the morning, while ministerial colleagues, who had assembled at the CM's residence, readied the nomination papers, the salt-andpepper bearded Ramakrishna Hegde in white *churidar* and off-white *kurta* prayed to the family deity with his mother, and his wife, Mrs Shakuntala Hegde. Shortly afterwards, the CM with his family (which included his pretty, curly-haired little granddaughter who kept on asking her grandfather, "Where are you going?" only to receive the same reply with a broad smile, "We are going to Kanakapura") took their seats in a green Matador. Ministers of the state followed in two other Matadors. Only one vehicle carried a small Janata Party flag. Among the ministers were H. D. Deve Gowda, S. R. Bommai, J. H. Patel, A. Lakshmisagar, M. Raghupathy and Jeevijaya. The pride of place was occupied by Mr P. G. R. Sindhia, the former MLA from Kanakapura who had resigned his seat to

enable Mr Hegde to contest

As the three-van motorcade left the city and entered Kanakapura constituency, arches welcomed Mr Hegde. At various points, villagers stood on the main road with huge garlands and Janata Party flags in their hands. In Uttarahalli, a few villagers blocked the road forcing the motorcade to stop. As Mr Hegde alighted from the van, followed by his wife, drums and walaga (a shehnai-like instrument) burst into music. Elderly villagers, almost bent with age, offered the garlands and thalis of fruits and auspicious coconuts. Mr Hegde and his wife were then asked by the villagers to accompany them to the village temple, close by, off the main road. There the priest offered his blessings once again and handed a packet of Rs 500 to the CM with the condition that Mr Hegde would use the amount for his deposit. As the motorcade left the village, slogans rent the air: "Ramak-rishna Hegde, zindabad," "Janata Party zindabad" and "Priya Ramakrishna Hegde zindabad." In fact, there were so many stoppages on the way to Kanakapura that what is normally a one-hour journey took more than three-and-a-half hours. Even at Kanakapura, the people would not leave the CM. Said an old Muslim woman, "He is our son. Today we will not leave him." The chief minister and his wife were taken in a procession to the Degula Math and the monument erected in honour of Mr S. Kariappa, a freedom-fighter and founder of the Kanakapura rural educational society. The Muslims too took Mr Hegde and his wife to the Jame

Masjid.

At 2.10, well into the afternoon, Mr Hegde made his way through the thousands of people who had gathered at the taluka office grounds to the taluka office where the assistant commissioner and returning officer for this byelection, Mr C. S. Kedar, was waiting. The nomination was proposed by four people, Mr K. G. Thimme Gowda, a leader of the vokkaligas who had refused the Congress(I) nomination to contest the election against Mr Hegde (incidentally Mr Thimme Gowda had been refused a Congress-I ticket in the January 1983 elections), Mr K. G. Srinivasa Murthy, the Janata MLA from neighbouring Satanur constituency, Mr Abdul Wazid and Mr M. V. Keerthi Hasan.

According to local people in and out of Kanakapura, whom this correspondent met, there is no way in which Mr Hegde can lose the seat. In the last elections, the Janata candidate, Mr Sindhia, had won the seat by a margin of 13,000 votes defeating the Congress(1)'s Mr Appaji. This time too, the Janata Party expects 75 per cent of the electorate (85,000 voters) to cast their votes. "The votes will not be divided," said local man Abdul Hasan. Mr Bangarappa has not been able to make any dent: He was booed and eggs were thrown at him when he went to campaign for his party,

As for the Congress(I), it has decided to field a Scotland Yard-trained detective, D. Linge Gowda, a retired inspector of police, who specialised in traffic control.

Tirthankar Ghosh

CONTRACTOR OF A CONTRACTOR OF beggars cannot be choosers and the state government is compelled to graciously accept the drops of water proffered by the centre. However, the shallowness of the SR's scheme is borne out by the fact that the metrowater itself supplies 15 lakh gallons a day to the railways! Metrowater naturally preferred that the railways transport water to meet their own needs so that, to an extent, their own burden would be relieved. Although Mr Choudhury has given the assurance that the railways will extend this scheme to benefit other stricken towns of TN as also double the city supply, the SR is still reductant to meet its own requirements on the plea that it lacks storage facilities. This is despite the fact that the SR does have a ground-level reservoir with a storage capacity of six lakh gallons at Ennore, near Madras. Another excuse peddled by the SR is that it does not having sidings near the reservoirs. It takes two to three weeks to put up a siding and the water crisis is not going to be resolved in just a few weeks' time. In fact, the real crunch is expected only by mid-June. Moreover, the SR is not agreeable to giving a quality certificate regarding the potability of water at the delivery point. Thus, while the SR has augmented the water supply it has also, by the same token, augmented the work of the overburdened staff of the metrowater.

From the metrowater's point of view the central government undertakings are the largest consumers of water. The Madras Refineries Limited accounts for 20 lakh gallons per day, the Madras Fertilisers Limited consumes ten lakh gallons, the railways 15 lakh gallons, Indian Oil Corporation one lakh gallons, Port Trust five lakh gallons and the CRPF two lakh gallons a day. Against this, the SR's supply of three lakh gallons per day is a mere pittance.

What has incensed the state government is that the centre is gaining so much publicity out of a gesture that really does not help solve the water problem. Already word is out in other states about how the SR has turned out to be Madras' saviour. At the same time the state government is compelled to maintain a stony silence, as exposing the non-viability of the scheme would sound churlish and ungrateful. The consequences of rejecting the offer outright would have disastrous consequences on the voters who spend sleepless nights to get even one bucketful of water. In fact, sensing the state government's reluctance, Mr M. Karunanidhi, DMK chief, had demanded to know in the Assembly whether the administration had rejected the offer. The minister for water supply, Mr S. Raghavanandam, hastily reassured the House that there was no question of rejecting the water although it would be subjected to potability tests. What has antagonised the state

government further is that there were no official talks regarding this matter. Until the sudden arrival of the wagons, they too were in the dark about the SR's scheme. In fact, the state government and the southern railways communicated with each other only through the press.

It is imperative to conduct potability tests before releasing the water into the city conduits, as the water is being transported in oil tankers. So far on a daily basis, nearly 15 per cent of the water is rejected because kerosene traces have been detected. Although the rest of the water smells overpoweringly of kerosene, it is nevertheless fed into the pipelines after diluting it with 'good water' on a 1:20 ratio. This correspondent took an opportunity to see and smell the Krishna water brought in the tankers. The odour of kerosene was so strong that the instinctive reaction is that the railways have solved not the water but the kerosene shortage in the city. There were pieces of flotsam in the water that churned one's stomach. But that, according to a metrowater official, was only 'undissolved solids' in the raw water which need not cause alarm as the water would be treated before reaching the consumers.

The scheme is also phenomenally expensive. The SR incurs an expenditure of Rs 1.5 lakhs every day for transporting the three lakh gallons of water from Andhra Pradesh. In other words, the Krishna water costs Rs two per gallon whereas the metrowater spends Rs two for 800 gallons. A much more productive ven-

ture would have been for the centre to allocate funds to sink several deep bore wells. This would also have been a more longterm solution. Meanwhile, a proposal was mooted by Mr N. Sunderraj (Congress---I) to transport water from the Neyveli lignite mines where there is an estimated flow of 1.8 lakh litres per minute. The member's suggestion is that the unused pipes of the Veeranam project can be used to transport the water to Madras. Although the state government claims it is looking into the proposal, it is not too happy at the suggestion, as this means a possible revival of the DMKsponsored Veeranam project, which despite being found technically feasible, had been put on ice by the AlADMK government for political

If the centre insists on transport. ing water it would have been far more sagacious to transport water by ship. A small tanker with a capacity of 30,000 tonnes can transport 60,000 lakh gallons. If two tankers were employed to bring water from Paradeep, Madras would have received 60 lakh gallons every third day. On a daily rate it works out to 20 lakhs gallons--six times more than what the railways is supplying at the moment. And the cost would have been the same. But the central government is adamant. After all, the scheme is getting it a lot of benign publicity. And such dividends are more than enough in the political calculations in India.

Anita Pratap

ORISSA

Heading towards an open revolt?

Bhubaneswar: Orissa is heading for a massive political crisis. The latest in a series of events, is the virtual demand by eight ministers to oust

Raghunath Patnaik: ultimatum to CM



one of their colleagues for his alleged acts of interference and misbehaviour. CM J.B. Patnaik, naturally, is a worried man. Faced with multiple attacks from all sides, the chief minister has become desperate. First, there are the dissidents continuously sniping at him. Second, is a series of allegations of corruption-the mustard oil being the latest. And now has come the revolt by eight of his ministerial colleagues, four of them senior cabinet ministers.

It happened when the high command was reviewing Orissa's political situation during the middle of last month. Chief minister Patnaik sent three senior colleagues, education minister Gangadhar Mahapatra, agriculture minister Basudev Mahapatra and the harijan welfare minister Ram Chandra Ulaka to Delhi. By that time it was known that the organisational elections in Orissa

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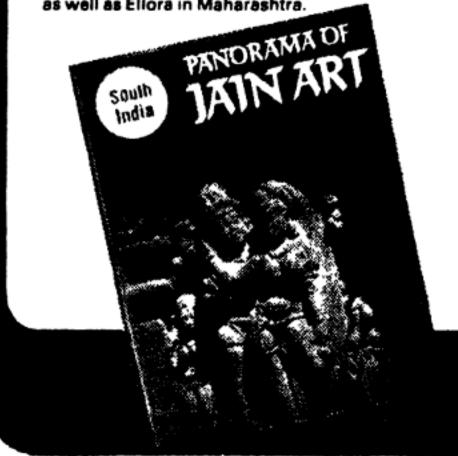
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had been virtually put off and that under no circumstances could Patnaik's nominee become the Pradesh Congress(I) president. But to ensure that his nominee somehow got nominated by the high command, the three ministers were sent. However, the high command is apparently in search of a man of stature. It was just some days after their return that the revolt started. Eight of the ministers went in a delegation and told the chief minister very bluntly that unless the chief minister clipped the wings of minister of state, Basanta Kumar Biswal, they would carry things to their logical end-open revolt.

This perplexed the chief minister and he even suggested that Biswal and the ministers sit together to sort things out. But that too was rejected. Mr Patnaik was further told that Biswal was getting away with a lot because he was under the protective wing of the chief minister. They maintained that once the chief minister's protection was removed they would be able to handle Biswal. The chief minister then met some of the ministers individually and finally sent Biswal to Delhi to gauge the mood of the high command. But the issue has not yet been settled. The ministers now feel that either the chief minister drops Biswal or faces a revolt in the party. The eight ministers are, education minister Gangadhar Mahapatra, agriculture minister Basudev Mahapatra, hari-



J.B. Patnaik: cornered

jan welfare minister Ram Chandra Ulaka, finance minister Raghunath Patnaik (these four are cabinet ministers), minister of state for industries Kishore Patel, minister of state for health Harihar Karan, minister of state for tourism Jugal Kishore Patnaik and minister of state for irrigation Niranjan Patnaik (who is a close relation of the chief minister).

There are three theories circulating in political circles, as to why these ministers took such a stand. The first is that they had genuine complaints. But this is unlikely, because Biswal's style of operation has been the same for the last three years. But only once had the finance minister sent a four page note alleging misbehaviour and interference by Biswal. The second reason is that the three emissaries had gauged the mind of the high command during their recent visit to Delhi and wanted to be on the right side of the powers that be. And the third reason being floated is that the whole game is one of shadow-boxing. The chief minister has realised that Biswal is the single largest reason for the government's poor image and therefore this had been engineered and leaked to the press to make Biswal's removal possible. But this does not seem likely for the adverse publicity it is getting, is much worse.

In any event, the chief minister is certainly in a tight corner and is losing his clout with the high command, with dissidents becoming bolder, the threat by his ministerial colleagues and, not the least, the emergence of a powerful Janata Party under the leadership of Biju Patnaik in Orissa.

S.P. Nanda

A dangerous method of birth control

Secunderabad: The announcement in January this year by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), that the injectable contraceptive, norethisterone, is ready for mass use, has sounded the alert among medical activists. One young feminist doctor involved in the women's health movement fears that the strategy of the population controllers is to 'push it through' before people even begin to raise pertinent questions about the safety, side-effects and suitability

The March 1983 issue of the Medico Friend Circle Bulletin has urged all concerned people to broadcast to the lay public the dangers of promoting norethisterone in a mass programme. The Centre for Education and Documentation, Bombay, (CED) has published a 15-page booklet entitled Injectables: Immaculate Contraception, detailing the areas of abuse and warning about the possible repercussions of the government giving a green signal to the inclusion of this method in a mass family planning programme. When CED members approached the ICMR-affiliated Institute for Research in Reproduction for more information on NET-EN (brand name of the new injectable), they were told that no information on the drug could be released. This was despite the widely publicised claim by the ICMR

deputy director-general, Dr B.N. Savena, that the drug had been "successfully" tested on 2,600 women in 14 centres round the country.

Basically normal injectable: like NET-EN and the more controversial Depo-pro-vera, prevent conception by inhibiting ovulation and by making the uterus hostile to the implantation of the fertilised ovum. The sideeffects, some of which are disputed, include menstrual chaos (unpredictable and irregular bleeding), possible infertility after discontinuation, possible chances of breast and cervical cancer (disputed), apart from a host of less serious but uncomfortable symptoms including headache, backache, decreased libidg, nausea and fatigue.

However, while the side-effects are part of a raging medical debate, what bothers the opponents of the injectable all over the world—including the Washington-based Health Research Group (affiliated to Ralph Nader)—is this: the target women being passive recipients of a shot-in-the-arm every three months, there is tremendous scope for indiscriminate use and abuse, especially if target-oriented monetary and other incentives are involved. It is feared that the recipients being illiterate and ill-informed, they may not be fully ex-

plained what the side-effects are. It is feared that the injectable will be administered without the informed choice of the women concerned. Activists have received innumerable examples of such abuses from those Third World countries where the injectable is being used on a mass scale. In the West it has been known to be used in a selective way on browns, blacks and other disadvantaged sections, although the drug has not been officially approved for wide use in both USA and UK. Instances have been cited of the injectable being used without the informed consent of the recipients (a girl in Scotland was given the contraceptive drug under the guise of a glucose injection).

The scope for abuse is high in a country like India where injections are considered the best form of medicine and the injection is seen as a panacea for all ills. The question being asked by opponents of the injectable is: should we be developing methods that are easier, faster and more convenient for those whose only interest is to curb population growth at any cost, or should we be developing new techniques that are safe and involve women in controlling their own fertility?

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THE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

It's a story of love at thist sight; of two young, ple Anuradha (grand daughter of the great Ashok Kumar) and Suml (Lahir) who met on a rainy night and the story goes on ..The two spend many, many happy hours together But the story does not end there for Anuradha' dather-a very wealths industrialist-does not approx or his daughter's friendship with Sunil. Well, the lovers cross all the obstacles on their path to happiness This, in short, is the story of a new film, awartie, release Phn Aayee Car saat. Directed by Jaiprakash (actress Nanda s brother) and produced by Shailendra and $M_1 \times V/R$. Badruddin, the film vas shot in Bhopal

The day Rakesh Roshan discovered director K Vishwanath was it dashis life took one big turn and changed for the better. His career as an actor till then was in a total mess. As a producer he had faced a big fiasco when his ambitious film Aap Ke Deewane flopped.

miserably at the boxoffice. Things were quite bad when Vishwanath entered and Jecoted to direct rfilm for him. Th result was Kaam Chor starring Rakeshand Javaprada with Suresh Oberoi and Neeta Mehta The tilm, a small one by any standards, was released and was an instant success. The shine and the smile came back on Rakesh's face Now Rakesh has a morevery me's 'acourne At present Rakesh is playing the lead role in Vishwanath's Shubhkamana, a film against dowry Vishwaaath will also direct another film for Rakesh ba-gd on his original award symmer and hit, Saprer adi

Dann Denzongpa avoids the gossip press like the pagage but the more he avoids it the more he becomes deeply embed ded in it. He had to sign a film called Krishna with Reena Roy as the nerome and her sister Barkhaa as the producer and the gossip column tas have already scotted writing about the passionate affair between Reena and Danny

Anuradha and Sund Tender momen.





Revulett and rain At a regard good looks

fter K. I't mmer taded A away from the scene and Balan K. Vair switched to bigger roles, Malavalam cinema has Leen havings dearth of villains the best who tried to all the Coccan were . . a mual as Into this Scenario de 28 h. Rex and 11 may an ance in the ara am di ectea by Ashok Kumar is any 10dication, he should make it big. Rex has the deep, cruel, rugged looks which makes all the difference. He took his villainy a bit too far when he delivered a fierce left hook to hero Lalu Alex's jaw. The mjured Lalu hit back with equal force and the shooting had to be held up. Rex has duly been stamped the obriquet Punit

I the sobriquet Punit Issai of Milayalam films.

In MGR's Sathya studios. makeup room that was reserved exclusively for the great MGR. Once he renounced films and turned to politics the room remained locked up. After a long time, Sivaji Ganesan was allowed to use it. Nobody else got the privilege of using the room. Now it appears that Sivaji's son Prabhu has been extended the privilege of using MGR's makeup room. Prabhu naturally is thrilled

Mohan Still has not stopped talking about his hat-trick that has come as a real boost to his career. One after another, three of his films-Kılinıalgal, Pavanangal Mudivathillarand Gopura**ngal** Sarvathillar—were hits. Mohan is really delighted by his success. Though he has already established a pretty good track record of over 30 films in four years, the three successes coming in a row has pushed him up several notches higher. But Mohan, trying to be modest says that it is not because of his talent but his good luck. He goes on to add that not many stars have this kirc f luck.

for a x it onth strug-🔼 🗧 📇 ac included a !rringer strike, Madhala Ranga Rao has finally won his battle with the censors. He has succeeded in getting his latest film Praiasakthi cleared at last. It may be recalled that the censors gave him a rough time earlier for his film Viplaba Sankham, There too. he had resorted to a hunger strike. Prajasakthi, stresses the need for adult education and exposes how godwomen and godmen are cheating the rural people by masquerading as representatives of god.

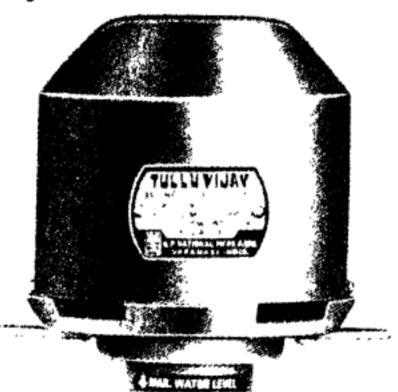
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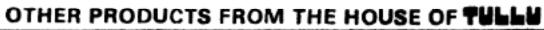
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ARIES (15 April—14 May) A word of advice for every-2 one this week: try not to be extravagant and conserve your resources. There are

chances that many of you might fall in love. On the professional front, however, be cautious for there might be severe reversals in store for you. Those of you who have decided to go on a short journey, will be disappointed.

Good dates: 1, 3 and 4. Lucky numbers: 2, 7 and 8. Favourable direction: East.

TAURUS (15 May---14 June) This week a splendid -opportunity will come your way and you must try to make use of it. Steady progress on the professional front will lead to financial gains. A favourable week for businessmen and those in speculative fields. Women are likely to receive gifts from abroad. This week looks risky for romantic ventures.

Good dates: 5, 6 and 7. Lucky numbers: 1, 4 and 5. Favourable direction: West.

GEMINI (15 June-14 July) This week forecasts slow O but steady progress. You will overcome your difficulties by sheer dint of hard work. Businessmen are advised to start making new investments at the end of the week. Your domestic affairs will be a source of inspiration and happiness. Those unemployed are likely to receive letters from abroad regarding their career.

Good dates: 2, 4 and 6. Lucky numbers: 3, 6 and 7. Favourable directions: North.

CANCER (15 July-14 August) Stellar influences make this a lucky period for you. Businessmen may start on new ventures and

professionals are likely to get promoted Students will gain honours for their extracurricular activities. For those in love, this is a good week for you. Secret meetings are foretold. Keep up your correspondences with your friends: it might help in the near future.

Good dates: 1, 3 and 5. Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 8. Favourable direction: North-west.

LEO (15 August---14 September) This is an excellent week for those in love since (C) your dreams are likely to be fulfilled. Those of you who are unemployed, your chances are bright in the coming future. Old friends might come to your help and you will stand to gain in matters of business. In financial matters you are advised to change your outlook: try not to be too extravagant.

Good dates: 3, 5 and 6. Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 8. Favourable direction: South-west.

VIRGO (15 September-14 October) Your fortunes do up this week. not look Those in business or employed elsewhere will have

to shoulder a lot of responsibilities. This might hamper your social life. Law suits and debts will cause great anxiety and there will not be any solution this week. Questionable romances may be avoided as this might pose further problems.

Good dates: 1, 6 and 7. Lucky numbers: 2, 3 and 9. Favourable direction: West.

ZLIBRA (15 October—14 November) Despite minor problems, this week will prove to be a fairly good one. Luck will favour you in

more ways than one your financial condition will improve and your family will have a comfortable time. Those in authority will encourage your new ventures. You are likely to inherit property through a benefactor. A short journey in the middle of the week will prove worthwhile.

Good dates; 2, 4 and 5. Aucky numbers: 4, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: West.

> SCORPIO (15 November---14 December) This will be a Un very busy week for you. You will be on your toes the whole week with both offi-

cial and domestic duties. At home, one of your near ones will get married. That will mean incurring a lot of expenditures. Those of you in the intelligence department, an information from a secret your fortune. source will change Speculative ventures should be avoided.

Good dates: 3, 5 and 6. Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 4. Favourable direction: South-west.

SAGITTARIUS (15 December---14 January) This week you will be tree from all kinds of troubles. You must FCI divert your energies else-

where. You can enter into new business, make changes in your professiona career, try to solve your property matters or go out on a pleasure trip. Do not hesitate to seek favours from those in authority.

Good dates: 2, 4 and 5. Lucky numbers: 7, 8 and 9. Favourable direction: South.

CAPRICORN (15 January---14 February) This week you will face financial difficulties. The money you had

saved for a rainy day will be drained out. At home, an elderly member might fall seriously ill. At office, it is quite likely that you will not get your salary. But don't worry. It is only for a brief period of time. In matters concering romance, go ahead.

Good dates: 1, 5 and 6. Lucky numbers: 3, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: East

AQUARIUS (15 February—14 March) This phase is particularly favourable for those seeking employment, friends or partners. On the

professional front, your troubles will be solved without much effort. Relatives will contribute to your happiness. Sportsmen and creative artists will be honoured. A lucky week for those appearing in examinations. Women are likely to receive presents of jewellery

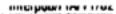
Good dates: 3, 4 and 5 Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 9 Favourable direction: South-east.

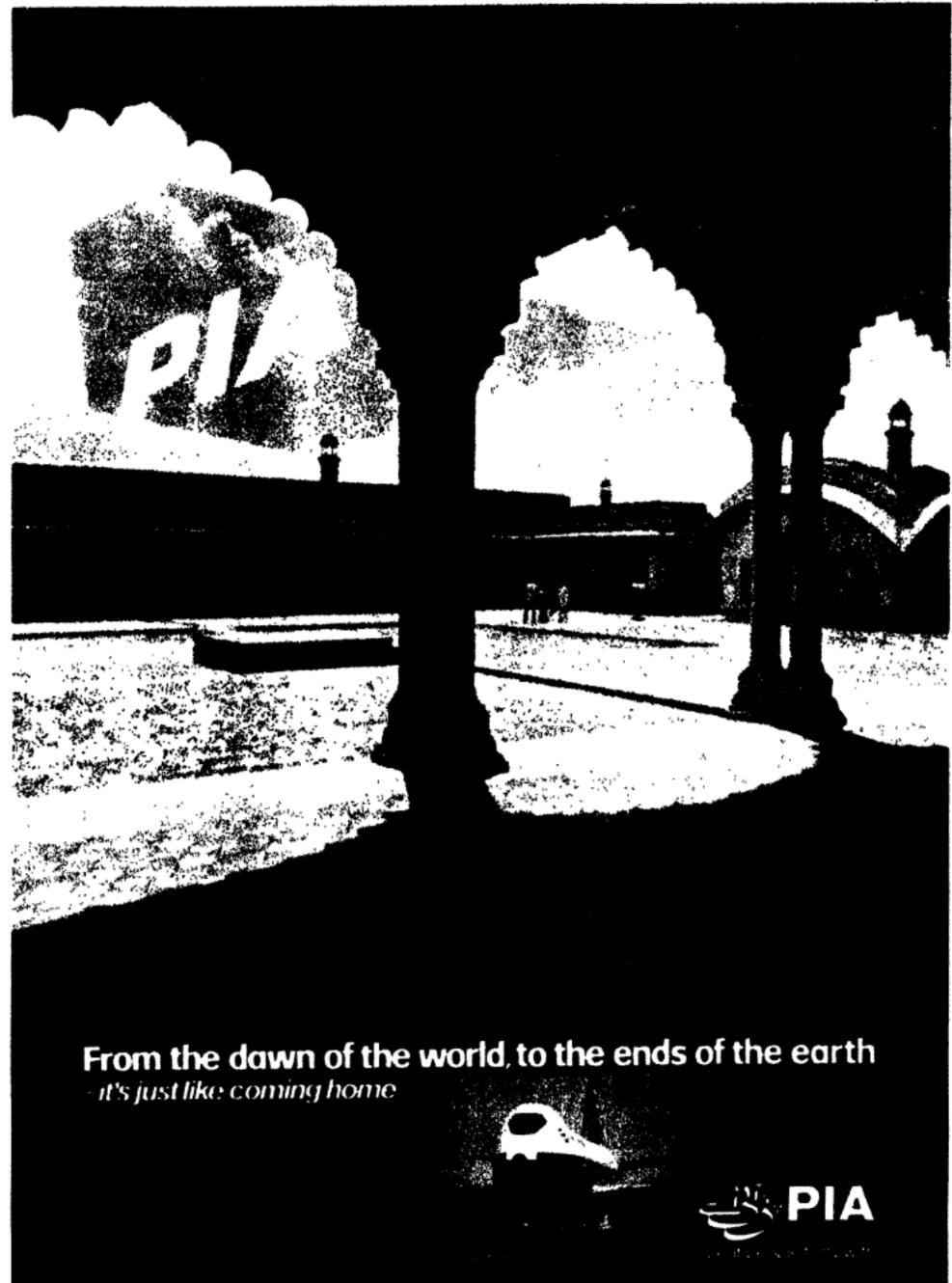
PISCES (15 March-14 April) Apart from one dark spot, this week looks very bright. You might have problems with your health. Those

employed, you will be asked to shoulder with a lot of responsibilities, but try not to overstrain yourself. Policemen and those in the army will receive awards for their bravery. This is also a very favourable week for politicians. For those in love, the end of the week looks bright.

Good dates: 2, 3 and 6. Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 8 Favourable direction: West.

For those born on Fridays: Most of you are usually very intelligent and extremely bright. However, some of you will suffer from ill-health throughout the year which will force you to spend a lot of time in bed. Naturally, this will make you an introvert, depending wholly on your parents and immediate family members who will become your best friends. Whenever you are well, try to spend a lot of time out of doors and enjoy yourself. You are advised to take up a career in writing, painting or classical music and you are definitely going to prosper. A word of caution do not take up jobs in technical fields.





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This India



PURI: For boycott of duties by the sebayats (priests), the deities in the Sri Jagannath temple here went without the cooked food offeringsmahaprasad—on 18 March 1983. Their abstention resulting in nonperformance of the ritual of offerings was in protest against the action of the temple management preventing all but a handful of them from entering the shrine hours before the President, Mr Zail Singh, visited it for darshan. All the mahaprasad valued at several thousands of rupees was buried to the utter disappointment of countless pilgrims-Times of India (Arindam A. Sengupta, Calcutta)

AMRITSAR: A local deputy superintendent of police, who will be retiring in six months after reaching the age of 58 years, has written to the Punjab government offering his services as a police officer without any salary after his superannuation. Both the local SSP, Mr S. S. Bains, and the IG Punjab, Mr V. K. Sawhney, are understood to have strongly recommended the DSP's application to the Punjab government for appointment after retirement. But the Punjab home secretary, Mr Amrik Singh Pooni, has not considered the representation of the DSP so far. An inquiry into the conduct of the officer, against whom there have been a number of corruption charges was ordered by the Punjab government some time back—Indian Express (Nancy Koul, Srinagar)

JAMMU: If you are unmarried wed soon otherwise you will not be entitled to a plot for building a house—at least not in Jammu. Under a new rule of the state government, "unmarried persons" will not be considered for the allotment of government plots. The development minister, Mr L. Sabir, does not think that

the rule is discriminatory—Tribune (S. M. Mehta, Chandigarh)

BOMBAY: He gave his blood 100 times and won a diamond ring. Thirty-three-year-old Haresh Bhuta, an insurance officer and father of two, is thus the champion blood donor of Maharashtra. Presenting the ring, the Maharashtra Governor, Mr l. H. Latif appealed to the people to emulate the example of Mr Bhuta—Hindu (B. K. Laldas, Madras)

SHIMOGA: A new "currency" in lieu of the legal tender is being used among the hoteliers in Shimoga. They issue tokens of different denominations instead of small change which, they claim, are valid even in KSRTC and many shops and hotels in the city. The hotel owners claim that coins and notes of lower denominations are in short supply in Shimoga in recent days. That is why they have to go in for token money—Indian Express (Prakash R., Bangalore)

NEW DELHI: Courtesy pays and pays handsomely, a very rude bus conductor has learnt. Normally rude to everyone, the conductor turned polite to an old woman on a day during a courtesy week his organisation was observing. Moved by the courteous conductor, the old woman left him all her wealth when she died. The conductor told pressmen, who met after learning of his inheritance, that he was very rude by nature but since the courtesy week was being observed, he considered it his duty to be polite—Indian Express (Maj. B. K. Salwan, Zunheboto)

TRIVANDRUM: A group of young men, belonging to the Hindu Young Men's Association (HYMA), today performed a symbolic purification ritual "to purge the Kerala Assembly of its impurities." The sudhikalasa (ritual purification) was to protest against the unprecedented scenes of bedlam during the just-concluded assembly session. HYMA volunteers came to the secretariat gate carrying brooms and buckets of water mixed with cow dung. They swept the ground at the gate and then sprinkled water over it. —Times of India (K.S. Prakash, Bombay)

MEHSANA: The chemistry question paper of the Higher Secondary School Certificate examination was being sold in the town on 6 April for Rs 1500 just hours before the commencement of the examination. A member of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, Mr Hitendra Patel got a cyclostyled copy of the paper at 11 am. —Indian Express (H.B. Thakkar, V.V. Nagar, Gujarat)

Without Comment

We were never impressed with Gandhi's ideology. The Sikhs suffered longer than Gandhi. If today there is a lot of noise about Gandhi, it is because the majority of the population is Hindu—Harchand Singh Longowal, Akali Dal chief

The film (Gandhi) basically wanted to show a little man struggling against the British empire. It had no time or energy for the real Gandhi—Ved Mehta, renowned writer

I know as much about politics as Rajiv (Gandhi) knows about acting—Amitabh Bachchan in The Times of India Sunday Review

The manner in which the nuclear issue is progressing has had a crushing effect on Soviet-American relations. Nobody imagined that these relations would be all cosiness and kisses when Mr Reagan came to office—The Economist



(In Kerala) I was struck with two things. One was that the people were devout churchgoers...On the other hand, I could not help but notice how irrelevant the church was to what the people really needed. In fact I predicted that Kerala was ripe for a major advance of the communist party...I realised that the church was not the answer—Newly-elected Australian PM Bob Hawke on how he lost his faith, in an interview with Philip Knightley in Indian Express

If I had my life to live over again, I wouldn't. Life is a privilege. Mistakes should be dropped in the wastebasket—Gloria Swanson, the silent movie queen of Hollywood, who died recently, quoted in International Herald Tribune

Batsmanship is a very hard job because you have to face so many balls and only one ball can get you out easily—Zaheer Abbas

















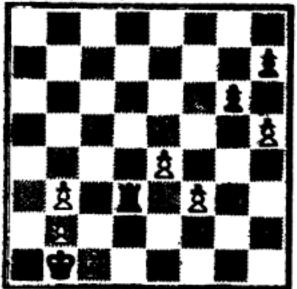








Mestel (Black) to move



Van der Wiel (White)

Grandmaster without a title

At the end of last year Jonathan Mestel finally become England's sixth grandmester, following a protracted sage of near-misses. Jonathan made his first two grandmester 'norms' as long ago as 1977, but the third and final one necessary for securing the title proved to be tentalisingly studire. On numerous occasions norms were missed by helf a point and, with his

first two norms due to lapse (for title purposes they are only valid for tive years), e was about to throw up his arms in ir when it suddenly came to light that he had in fact achieved the necessary third and final leg some three years ego without ambody actually realising it. Regulations surregarding this norms

Regulations surreunding title norms have become mind-bogglingly complex over recent years with such a morses of amendments, special cases and general confusion that they could have been conceived by the Civil Service itself. It was at a tournament in Denmark in 1979 that Mestel, though apparently missing the grandmaster norm by half a point, had in fact exceeded it by that margin. As a result Jonethan apont three years in a kind of chess-playing wildemess, a grandmaster without a title. Happily, at lest the two heve been united.

A game from the Lucerne Olympied in which Jonathan shows his qual defence and counter attack to help England to a 4-0 win over Holland, the one outstanding result in an otherwise disappointing English performance.

White: J. Van der Wiel. Black: A.J. Mestel Sicilian Defence

Dragon Variation

1 P-K4 P-084 3 P-04 PMP 2 N-KB3 P-03 4 NxP N-KB N-K83 8 B-K3 6 N-Q83 P-KN3 8-N2 7 P-83 N-83 8 0-02 B-02 The result of some hectic pre-game prepait had not been analysed, there had been no time to reject it. 9 0-0-0 it-081

tack delays castling to avoid dangerous Assoratical lines. 10 K-N1 N-K4 11 P-KN4 0-0

12 N-0571 A miscalculation. Simply 12 P-KR4 to

correct. P-K3 13 N-83

For 13 NxN+ OxN 14 B-KN5 is met by 15 . NKBPI

P-QR3 14 P-KR4 P-QN4 15 B-R6 P-N5 16 Ball Kath 17 QN-K2N-85!

Counter attack. Black secrifices the QNP

for a strong initiative. 18 QxP P-K4 19 N-QN3 P-QR4 21 N-N3!?

20 Q-K1 P-R5 Not enamoured with his prospects after 21 N-Q2 N-K6 22 R-B1 Q-N3, White coun-

ter-secrifices to stem the tide. 22 RPxP N-OR4 24 Q-Q2 B-R3 26 RxR RxR PxN

23 Rup Q-82 25 P-Rt KR-Q1 27 8-Q3 N-83 28 Par

29 Q-N5 N-N5 gnaffing a new attack. To quote Tony is, "If that's not mate, I'm a Dutchman." 30 N-R5+ Nam 31 Pan B-OMP! 32 PxB RxB 33 R-QB1 DIAGRAM

R-OS! After 34 RxR Q-87+ Tony Miles is not a

Dutchmen

MICHAEL STEAN

Double voids seem to be a speciality of Canadian bridge. At least strate have been reported from their last thempionship week, of which this was the most drematic:

| Dealer | North Ga | me afi |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| | 1063 | |
| 1 | 10 9 8 6 | |
| (| A 5 3 | |
| | A 5 4 | |
| ♠ A J 5 2 | N | ▲ KQ9874 |
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| | AKQJ7 | • 2 |
| , | Ka J 108 | • |
| • | | • |

In one of the few metchies where there was no awing the bidding went at one table:

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----------------|----------------|------------------------|------------|
| 6W 7W No | 84 No No | No dble No No | No Able |

East hoped his double would be interpreted as Lightner, inviting a club lead, but West led a dismond; much the same at the other table, 2,470 to North-South.

ration in which this move did not figure. As

in another metch the rugged Canadians, Pomykalski and Gartagania, were East-West and the bidding went:

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | |
|----------------|------|------------------------|--------------|
| - | - | No | No! |
| 24 | No | 2NT | Not |
| 30 | No | 44 | Nol |
| 24 34 74 | No | 7 7 | cible |
| recible | No | No | No |

This time West led a club, for 400. His ammates made Six Hearts doubled, 1,860 and a swing of 19 RMPs.

One pair test 1,880, defending against Six Hours doubled, made with an overtrick. But they gelred 12 points, so their team-mates registered 2,470 in Seven Hearts

Finally, the quartet of Cerruthers-Guobe, Molson-Baron, lost 1,860 when defend gainst Six Species doubled and 2,470 hon defending against Seven Hearts outlied. That was off the board of the MIP scale, which grows weary at 4,000 and 24 points.

TERENCE REESE

Stamp



Although it is 70 years since the lest stamps were issued in the kingdom of Montenegro, mint examples of many laures can still be bought for a few pence each. Most of them have a portrait of Prince Micholas Petrovitch, who reigned for almost 80 years, promoting himself to king in 1910 as part of his golden jubiles celebrations. Having sided with Serble on the authreak of the First World War, Montenegro was overrun by the Austriane and Nicholas sought refuge in Italy. In 1918 Montenegro opted to become part of Yugoslevia and remaining stocks of the Montenegrin starrage were sold change in Montenegrin stamps were sold cheeply to dealers. This 25-pare stamp was incurded to defray the child of acknowledging the C. W. HILL

What does a poltergeist do?

Are diatoms atom bombs?

Other than a jet engine for a plane. what is a jet?

4. Where is the North-east passage? 5. In the middle of the 17th century, a change occurred in the drinking habits of

Englishmen. What caused the change? 6. When was the typewriter invented?

Russian Yuri A. Gagarin was the first to have made the manned orbital flight of a duration of one hour and 48 minutes. What was the name of his mission?

8. What is a brown recluse or a fidele-

9. When was Buddhism founded?

9 Mount 525 BC A. A spuder commonly found in the USA.

J. Mostook J. Soute of the United States of America. 6, 1868, It was invented by Gloden 5 Tee.

ANAMAC TO THE BENING STRING, 4. The passage stretches from the North Jewellery.

which takes on a high polish. It is used for 3 II is a deep-black lossii substance commonly found in hitely and salt water. S 1904 at all They are one-ceiled algae THOOLE SERVING BIN

ADS OL STALK MURCH SDECISHESS IN BALOM-Year a mad of bevelled at salegreging A .f

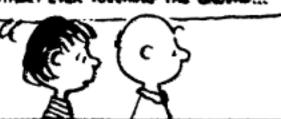
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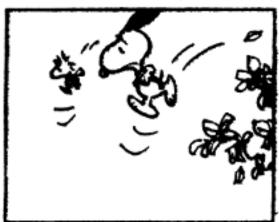
THEY SAY THAT WHEN THE COLONISTS FIRST CAME TO THIS COUNTRY A SQUEREL COULD TRAVEL TREETOP TO TREETOP FROM THE ATLANTIC TO THE MISSISSIPPI RINER ATHOUT EVER TOUCHING THE GROUND...









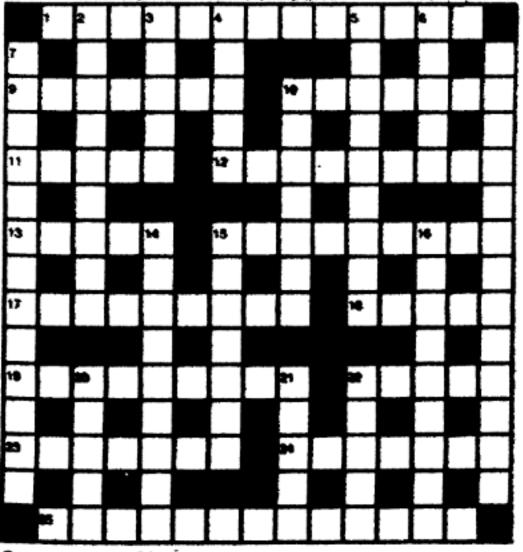






Sunday crossword

No. 2



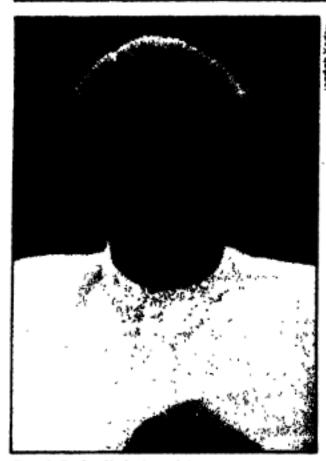
Compiled by Min Towns

- One of these, apparently, can save nine (1.6.2.4)
- 9. Strange ricy lec turns out a kind of acid. (7)
- 10 Erik inc. is in trouble, finding skating lecility. (3-4)
- 11 These birds sound as though they get wages! (5) 12 is tin sent? Order muddled, how pressing. (9)
- 13. Wilk, with nothing in the fall. (5)
- 15. Trainer includes loose rock for the pest. (9)
- 17. Presses on madly to get replies. (9)
- 18. Rows-of degree? (5)
- 19. One rat's boat in turnoil gets us to the slaughterhouses. (9) 22. This high way seems dividable. (5)
- 23. Bring forth a wild act. O Evel (7)
- 24. Spoor gets mixed up with six, discovering clause. (?) 25. Bury wedlock, do we hear? Just the opposite (13)
- 2 Oust nurse, perhaps, proving exertive. (9).
- 3. Maybe one tess could be found in the ocean. (5)
- red accountant contorted with twitch for prictly plants. (5)
- 5. One in charge of funds, however, seems like a hourder of weelth! (9)
- 9. Cereel that we can't easily find a way out of? (5)
 7. Liquid cure recommended to the Pobble by his sunt. (8.5)

- 10. Discreamined sections, leaving nothing out? 15 across being one of them. (7)

- 14. Horizontal position, right within the gland. (9)
 15. But this scap isn't necessarily from Spain. (7)
 16. Abolishing all sunsing, perhaps, without south. (9):
 20. Oak product, or a toe allment? (5)
 21. Excessive in composition-delighblul (5)
 22. French friend and alternative join to find New Zeelander. (5)
 Solutions to States Creenwest In. 1
- 1. Proclaimed 6. Bard 10. Elemel 11. Elicits 12. Extravert 13. Aiate 14. Reked 15. Scrap—heap 17. Disarming 20. Inter 21 Ebony 23. Mulateers 25. Testier 28. Acaptic 27. Resk 28. Plathudee
- 1 Piece 2. Overteines 3. Landondurry air 4. Mness 5. Ejector 7. Ames 8. Distançar 8. Disappointment 14. Red latter 16. Entreated 18. Immoral 19. Gallant 32. Ossis 24. Sects

HARYANA'S DIVIDED OPPOSITION



Devi Lal: fighting his partymen

WITH Mr Devi Lal heading the state unit of the Janata Party, it seems that Mr Bhajan Lal does not have to worry about any problems from the opposition. The Lok Dal, which could not form a government in the state after the last Assembly elections, split into two after differences arose between Mr Devi Lal and party chief Chaudhury Charan Singh, with the former joining the Lok Dal (K). Subsequently, the Lok Dal (K) merged with the Janata Party. As soon as Mr Devi Lal entered the Janata Party, a repeti-

tion of the 1977-79 period became evident: quarrelling broke out between pro and anti-Devi Lal groups. (The first blow to the Janata party after the 1977 elections was delivered by Mr Devi Lal when he dismissed Mrs Sushma Swarai from the state cabinet. Later, during the 1979 split in the Janata, Mr Devi Lal was the torch bearer for Chaudhury Charan Singh.) Now that Devi Lal has become the president of the state unit of the Janata Party he has started hitting out against Mrs Sushma Swaraj, Balwant Rai Tayal and Baldev Tayal, who had opposed him during the 1979 Janata split. The result is that Mrs Swaraj has refused to work as party treasurer and Devi Lal in turn has issued a show cause notice to Mrs Swaraj to explain her action.

The case with the Lok Dal is the same: the leader of the legislative party, Mrs Chandrawati and the state president of the Lok Dal are up in arms against each other. Such is the situation in the Lok Dal that party president Charan Singh told his partymen in Kurukshetra in the second week of April that though the Lok Dal was the largest opposition party in Haryana, other opposition parties like the BJP gave a better account of themselves during the last budget session.

It is little wonder, therefore, that Bhajan Lal considers his position to be safe—at least as far as the opposition is concerned.

SURYA: PROBLEMS AGAIN

SURYA, the fortnightly magazine once owned by Mrs Amteshwar Anand, Mrs Maneka Gandhi's mother, is facing problems again. After the sale of the magazine to Dr J.K. Jain and Sardar Angre, who are known to be close to the RSS, relations between Mrs Indira Gandhi and her daughter-in-law had soured. But relations between Maneka Gandhi and the new proprietors had been very cordial. So much so that two persons close to Maneka Gandhi, Mr Manu Sahi and Mr Vijay Sood, worked for the magazine even after a change of proprietors. (Mr Sood had joined Surya in 1979 as production manager and after July 1980 had started looking after its marketing as well; Mr Sahi joined the magazing in June 1982 as its managing editor on Mrs Maneka Gandhi's recommendation.) Now

both of them have left Surya because of the growing differences between the new management and the pro-Maneka Gandhi staff. The trouble, according to Maneka Gandhi's supporters, started when Mr Vijay Maroo, known for his close links with the RSS, became senior business executive of the magazine. It was then that the magazine, which had till then been sympathetic to Maneka Gandhi, became a BJP mouthpiece. Mr Manu Sahi tendered his resignation on 22 March this year, while Mr Sood left on 31 March, inspite of the fact that Dr Jain tried to persuade both of them not to leave. With the exit of Messrs Sood and Sahi, all other pro-Maneka staffers have started leaving Surya as well. Dr Jain is now left with the task of appointing a new staff for the magazine.

DISSIDENTS WOO OPPOSITION IN MP



Saklecha: meeting Congress(I) dissidents

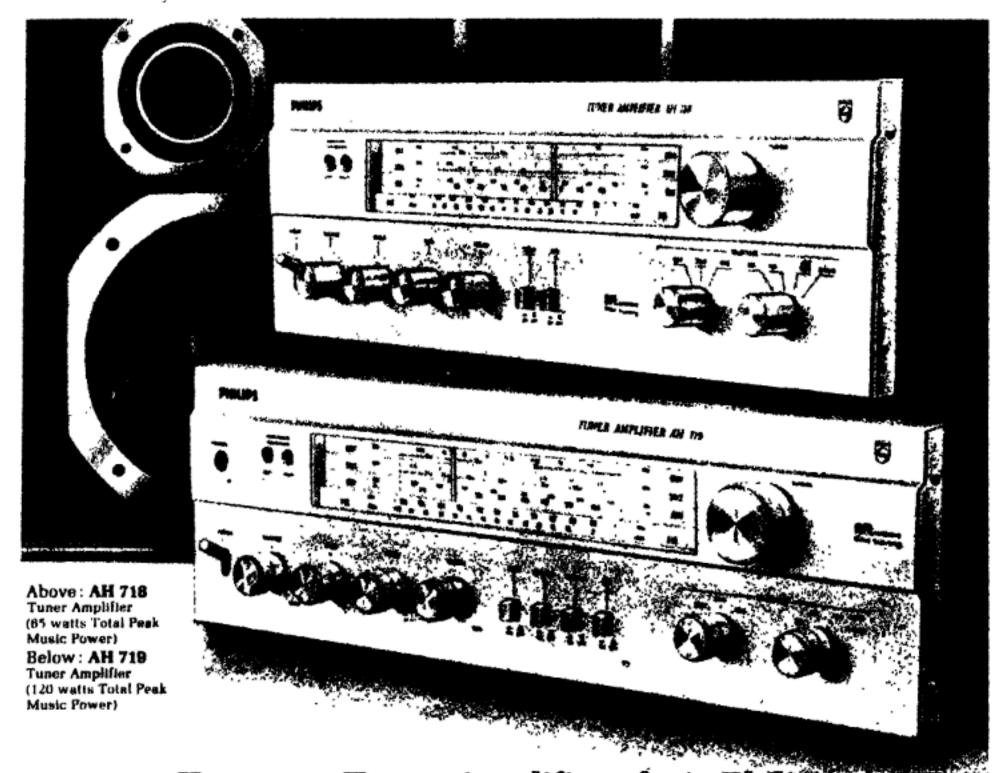
AFTER the snubbing a number of Congress(I) dissidents from Madhya Pradesh got from the Prime Minister on 16 March, the politics of this state has entered a new phase: a number of important dissident MLAs from Bilaspur, Durg and Raipur have started crossing over to the opposition camp. Not only this, Congress(I) dissidents are openly meeting former chief minister and Bharatiya Janata Party leader V.K.Saklecha for discussions. A senior Congress(I) dissident has even started claiming that if Andhra Pradesh can have its Telugu Desam, Madhya Pradesh too, can have its own regional party.

A new angle has been added to this political scenario with Mr Saklecha accusing fellow partyman and leader of the opposition in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly S.L.Patwa, of playing into the hands of chief minister Arjun Singh by not opposing him on the floor of the House.

TAILPIECE: What does the abbreviation RSM stand for? The easiest answer, of course, is Rashtriya Sanjay Manch. But there are other answers. The most interesting are the tongue-in-cheek ones: Rajiv, Sonia and Maneka (in order of seniority in the Nehru-Gandhi household after Mrs Indira Gandhi) or, Rajiv Sans Maneka. You can choose the one which you like.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN





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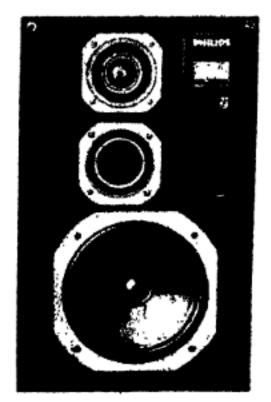
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The \$250 million scooter

In just twelve years, Bajaj Auto has earned India way over \$250 million in hard currencies. In fact, the total is now nearing \$275 million.

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At home, Bajaj Auto vehicles play all sorts of roles. One of them is a little unusual: They help the Government mobilise public savings! In fact, right now there is more than Rs1,300 million in post offices and scheduled banks, as deposits for Bajaj vehicles.

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For a closer look at the Indian business environment



s Standa da's leading business daily

Editor: Dr. D. K. Rangnekar From the Ananda Bazar Group of Publications

For your copy write to The Circulation Manager, The Ananda Bazar Group of Publications, 6 Prafulla Sarkar street, Calcutta 700001 The inauguration of the 3600 mm Plate Mill is another significant landmark in Bhital Steel's 24 years of steel making history!

The 3600 mm Plate Mill, with its Computerised Process Control Systems is the most sophisticated mill of its kind in the country. The sophistication in technology can be gauged by its precision machinery. Information about metal temperature will be given out by photo-electric pyrometers, located in different places of the rolling train. Magneto-resilient sensors installed in the lower back-up roll chocks will be used for measurement and regulation of rolling forces. Each slab will have its code, on the basis of which complete rolling programme will be set beforehand by the programming device. The Plate Mill is to produce annually 950,000t of heavy plates upto 3200 mm width. Subsequently, with installation of additional facilities an ultimate annual capacity of 1.2 MT of finished plates will be reached.

To meet the increasing demand of sophisticated varieties of steel products,

SAA/BSP/2A

Bhilai has launched a major expansion programme to increase its annual capacity from the present 2.5 million tonnes to 4 million tonnes. Work on this project is aiready well underway with the 3600 mm Plate Mill Complex as the centre spread. The mill will use some of the finest skills and technology available in the world. In true Bhilai tradition, every input of equipment, manpower and resources required in erection and commissioning has been planned and monitored with meticulous care to ensure completion of the project with precision.

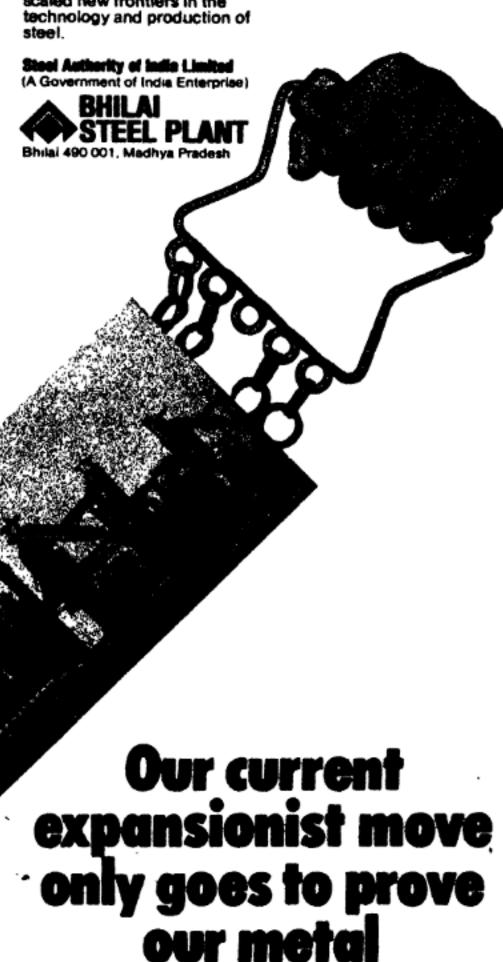
Productivity is not new to Bhilai. Ever since the commissioning of its first Blast Furnace in February, 1959, Bhilai Steel has maintained its leadership in this core sector with conspicuous success.

Indigenisation: the proof

The 4 million tonnes expansion of Bhilai Steel Plant is an example of the dynamic progress in indigenisation of technology Whereas the indigenous content was only about 18% during the 1 million tonne

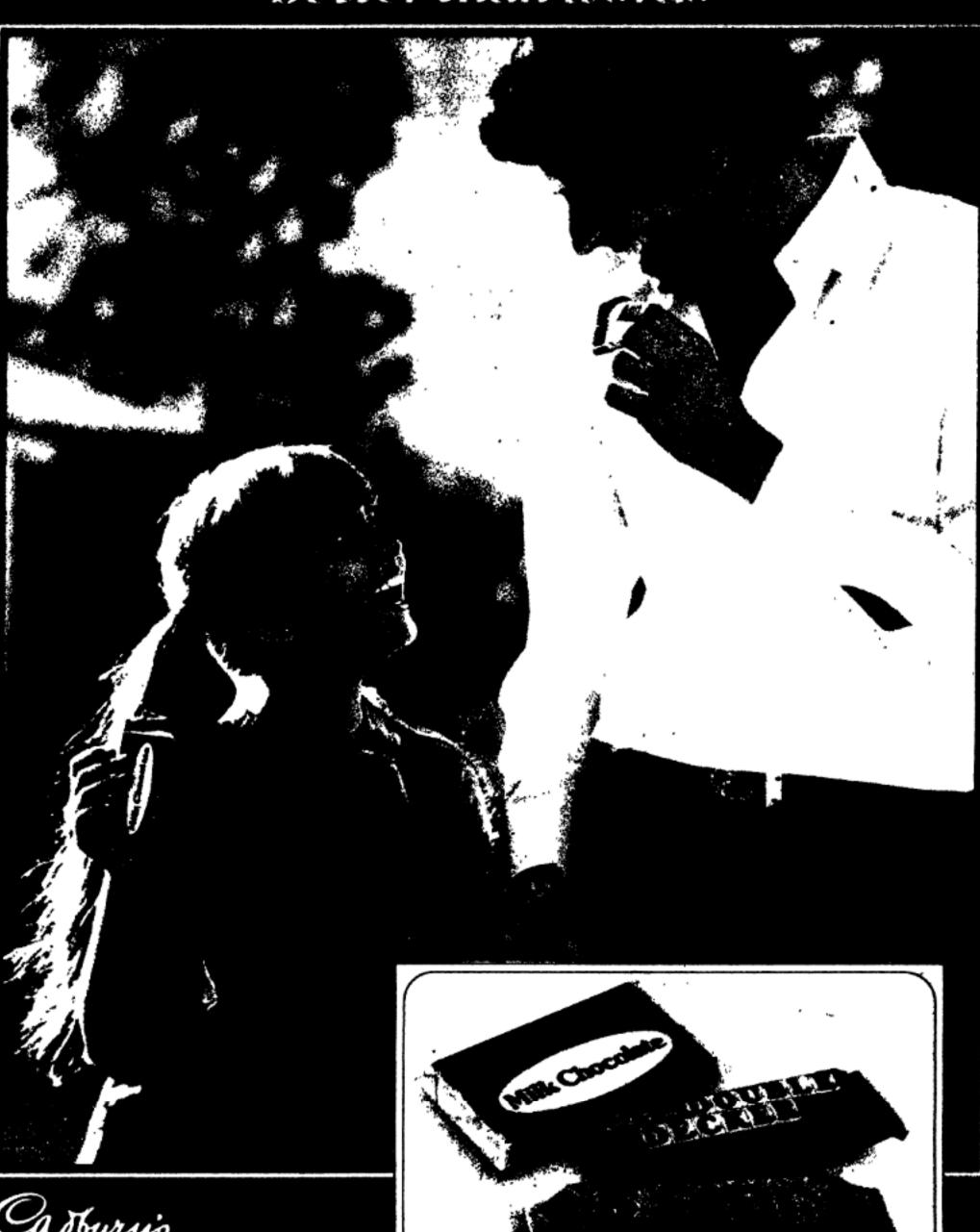
stage of the project, this has risen to as much as 83% in the 4 million tonne expansion.

What makes the 4 MT expansion of Bhilai Steel a commendable example of productivity? The 62,500 steelmen who make up this giant venture. It is through their skills, their determination, their initiative that the Bhilai Steel Plant has scaled new frontiers in the technology and production of steel.



Building a stronger tomorrow. For the people-by the people.

Sometimes, Cadbury's can say it better than words



Casbury's



Rajasthan is in the grip of a sovere drought which has brought in its wake starvation and deaths. There is little water and even less food. The government at Jaipur, meanwhile, continues to deny these reports. An on-the-spot investigative account by Madhu Jain, who toured the drought-affected districts of the state.

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How would Mahatma Gandhi have reacted if he had seen Richard Attenborough's film on his life and times? I S Johar, the controversial actor-turned-playwright, answers this question in his latest play.

Page 40



On 24 March, after a period of 24 years, the Dalai Lama, spiritual head of the Tibetans, visited Arunachal Pradesh as a guest of the Indian government to meet the Tibetan refugees living in the area. Vivek Sengupta spoke to the Dalai Lama at Dirang to file an exclusive interview.

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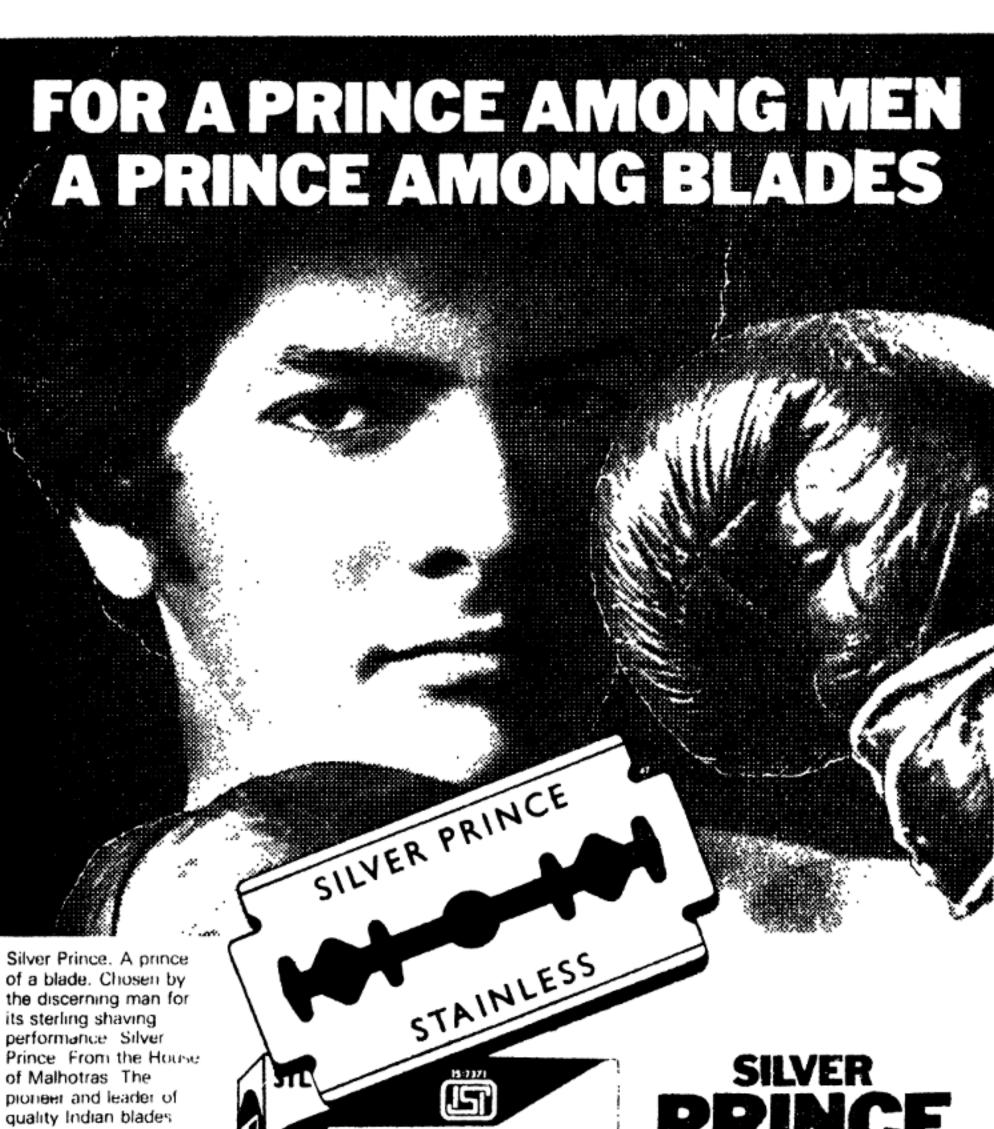
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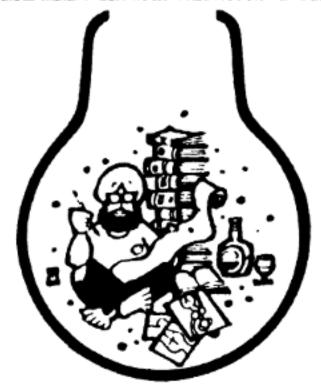
CERA is beautiful range of sanitaryware

Stray thoughts on Assam

y now most of us have a fair idea of the magnitude of the Assam problem; but as yet no one has come out with a viable solution. The problem was created when a people with a linguistic and social identity of their own were inundated by successive waves of outsiders whose continued presence threatens to obliterate these identities. It is like getting up one fine morning to find that a squatter had pitched his tent and was cultivating a part of your kitchen-garden.

When, why and how these outsid ers entered Assam is also common knowledge. The first wave of outsiders were welcomed soon after the division of the country by known Assamese politicians to create votebanks for themselves. Most of these were East Pakistani Mus-Jims. A second wave came in to escape the wrath of the Pakistani military machine when it cracked down on Bangladesh freedom fight-Most of these were Hindus because Bengali Hindus were the prime targets of Pakistan's Punjabi army. Others have been trickling into Assam because of better job opportunities and the availability of land. It never was, not ever will be, very difficult for outsiders to smuggle themselves into Assam because its borders can never be effectively scaled off. And though an agreement may be possibly airived at about the "cut off" date and after laborious procedures identify those that came thereafter, it is inconceivable that anything will be done about them. They will resist any attempts to throw them out. Bangladesh will refuse to take them back. Indian states may make token gestures by accommodating a tew thousand families here and there. But the rest will stay put where they are. All said and done the problem is one of too many people and too little land. The pattern of killings that have taken place support this contention. People have gone for strangers who occupied lands and forests next to then villages irrespective of what race or religion they were or what language they spoke. It was everyone against their new neighbours. For the Assamese it is Hobson's choice, whether they call them foreigners or outsiders they will have to learn to live with them. Or, do what they are doing: that is, go on killing each other,

However, much more is expected from the rest of India than lip sympathy. The Assamese have already developed a sense of being discriminated against. Like the Nagas and Mizos (and sometimes



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

Kashmur Mushms) it will not be long before they too will start addressing us as "you Indians" as if they were a people apart. The elections were a grievous but a pardonable error of judgement for which the opposition must accept its share of blame. However, let us forget the past and think of what we can do now Although no expert, as an Indian, I suggest the following steps. Enst, release all political prisoners Second, tree the Assamese press from the shackles 'of censorship and restore freedom of association and speech. Three, remove officials who no longer enjoy the confidence of the Assamese people Four, scrap the Assembly and reimpose President's Rule.

Returees from Assam





Five, get the Assamese leaders back to the table and tell them bluntly that nothing very much can be done about "foreigners" now. Six, tell all the states of India that unless they share the burden of the Assamese we will forever forfeit their sense of belonging to India. Auden's lines come to mind:

Acts of injustice done

Between the setting and the rising sun

In history lie like bones each one The future, hard to mark,

Of the world burning in the dark
Where ghosts are walking and dogs

Rain makers

The predicament in which Madras finds itself should compel us to devise ways and means of ensuring regular supply of water. It makes little difference whether we get it in droplets from the heavens or canalise what comes down mountain streams or have to haul it up from the bowels of the earth. There are two kinds of options open to us, the hard and the soft. The hard require digging up storage tanks and tubewells, laying canals and erecting water towers. Sof* options are to remain at the mercies of the rain gods, and if they are angry, propitiate them with suitable sacrifices. Of the soft options the softest is to hire tantrics. Being a people averse to hard work, we have opted for tantra which has a lot in common with black magic. Apparently over a dozen tantrics are currently standing neck deep in water chanting mantras to cajole the clouds to yield up their treasures. I would have liked to describe the exercise as making water, but since the expression is liable to be misunderstood, I will call it rain-making.

The practice is as old as mankind. It is known in the occult world as psychokinesis or P.K. designed to give the mind control over matter and endow it with the power to influence the environment without physically meddling with it. The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics states that "in countries inhabited by primitive people where rain is scarce magico-religious ceremonies are resorted to. In fact, so important is this aspect of primitive cult that a special class of magicians and, in some cases, a particular totem, are set apart for the due performance of rain-making ceremonies." Amongst the "primitive" named by the encyclopaedia are Australian aboriginals, Mexican Indians, certain African tribes and we Indians. Special mention is made of the Kol tribes of Bengal who regard Tarang Buru or the Great Mountain who dwells on a range of hills near Lodman in Chota Nagpur as the rain god. The encyclopaedia has no

reference to Varuna Japam (prayer for rains) in the Rig Veda which is being invoked to slake the thirst of our Tamilian brethren.

We all know the outcome. If by chance it rains in Tamil Nadu, the tantric swamis will take credit for it. If it does not, nothing will be said, no one will take them to task or prevent them from offering their services in another drought-stricken area and citing "earlier instances which such a propitiation had resulted in copious rain."

Sowing rain clouds with pellets is scientific. Bombarding them with mantras is not. On the contrary, it panders to ignorance and superstition unworthy of a nation which can shoot rockets into space and plumb ocean depths for nodules. If I knew of a counter japam I would invoke it, simply to frustrate the swamis from getting away with it and impress on our people that there are no soft options. If you want water dig canals, wells and storage tanks.

While we are on the subject of superstition, we might as well take note of another unhealthy practice on which tantrics keep themselves on cow milk ghee. These are chanting of mantras to destroy one's enemies (*maran mantra*) and its antidote mahamritunjaya jaap. According to gossip, Kedar Pandey fell victim to the mantra. Bhajan Lal, chief minister of Haryana, was luckier. It only hit him in his left eye. Very sensibly instead of depending on the preventive-curative jaap he flew off to the United States to have it medically treated. I had always laboured under the impression that mantras and jaaps were like prayers offered only for good causes. What perversity of religion are we witnessing?

Spooning

A Delhi burra sahib has his own unique method of teaching subordinates how to discharge their duties. One day the chaprasi who brought him his morning coffee forgot to put the spoon in the saucer. The sahib rang for the chaprasi and ordered: "Taste this coffee."

"Garam nahin hai (Is it not hot

enough)?"

"Taste it."
"Cheenee kum hai (Not enough sugar in it)?"
"Taste it."

"Dood kum hai (Not enough milk in it)?"

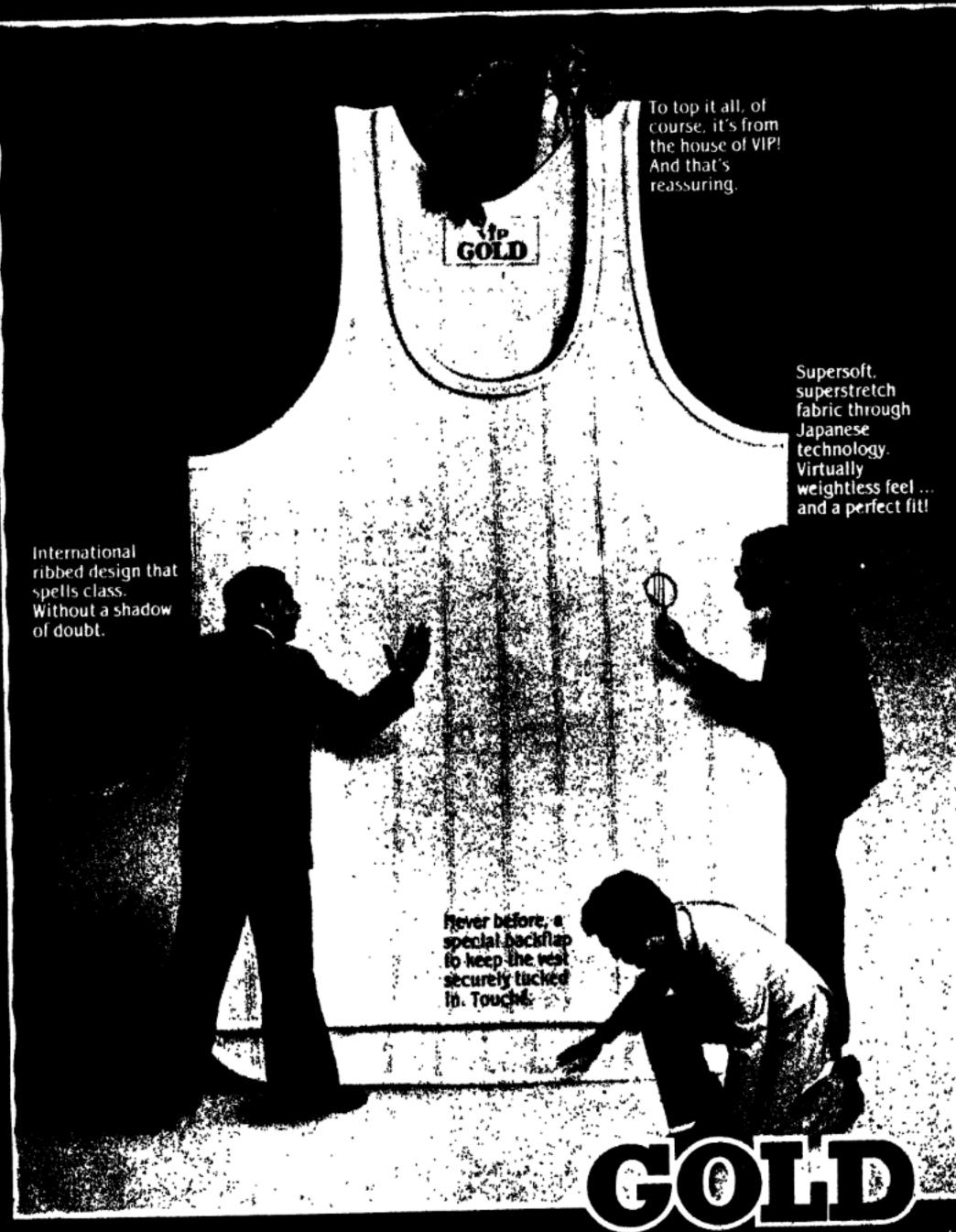
"Take a sip and taste it," roared the sahib in anger, pushing the cup and saucer towards the chaprasi.

"Okay sahib as you order, where is the spoon?"

"Where is it?"



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Causes of IAF air crashes must be explained

n air marshal in a moment of rare candour and perhaps, concern, admitted to his boys the other day that the Indian Air Force (IAF) last year lost more aircraft than it did in the 1971 war against Pakistan. Giver our penchant for security, the exact figure will never be known. And thus a tale of what certainly is not efficiency, will be brushed under the

carpet.

This business of security has been stretched bevond reason. While the Western nations freely discuss the accidents that happen even in its air battles, the IAF prefers to hide behind the announcement that "a court of inquiry" has been ordered. There rests the matter, till another accident takes place and is followed by yet another such announcement. Whatever soul-searching that takes place is not known to the nation. which should know how many of its pilots—and planes—have been lost And, even more, how they came to be lost. Accidents have a demoralising effect on those who fly the machines, and they also have the right to know what went wrong.

The time has come now when for its own good, the IAF should open its doors before the gaze of the nation, not only for the Republic day fly-past or the fire power demonstration but for the purpose of an independent probe. The nation should be told why its planes are crashing time and again. Today's aircraft cost tens of crores of rupees and this cost is going to escalate when we induct Mirage-2000s and MiG-27s into service. Perhaps the nation can bear the monetary loss of these accidents, but what about the pilots who die?

It is indeed frustrating that these accidents are not reported in detail. The whole episode is dismissed with the news that a court of inquiry has been ordered. However reassuring it may be to know that an inquiry is being made, the number of times we have been told this, invites more scepticism than confidence.

In an earlier column I had highlighted an accident when only one helicopter appeared for the salute during the golden jubilee celebrations of the IAF instead of the planned three, the other two having collided in mid-air, minutes before the final run. This was a serious matter but my information is that the whole incident has been hushed up. I am also told that the leader of the fly-past, an officer commanding a helicopter unit, continues in his position despite the fact that he has more than one helicopter crash to his credit. Then there is the case of an air marshal who as squadron leader and squadron commander during the 1965 war with Pakistan earned the dubious distinction of presenting the Pakistanis with a fully armed and serviceable Gnat. Pakistanis gloating over this incident are reflected with pictures in a book by Air Marshal Asghar Khan. The pictures show, among other things, the Indian officer as a POW as well as his Gnat

The book says that the officer was dismissed from service while

All courts of inquiry (into the IAF aircrashes) are (not) biased but since these are within the ambit of the Air Force Act, in practice the will of the chief of air staff, whosoever he may be, prevails. I wonder if this does not reduce a court of inquiry findings to mockery.

he was a POW in Pakistan. But this is not true. Not only is he still in the IAF, in fact, he is also flourishing. And who knows an air marshal of today could well be the chief of staff tomorrow. How was his conduct condoned by the court of inquiry that must have examined this officer? Like so many mysteries that beset the IAF, this also is one.

It is not my contention that all courts of inquiry are biased but since these are within the ambit of the Air Force Act, in practice the will of the chief or air staft, whosoever he may be, prevails. I wonder if this does not reduce a court of inquiry findings to mockery. Given the spate of accidents and incidents in the IAF and the high cost in terms of human life and equipment, there is need for a closer look at its functioning.

As most of the aircraft which crash are assembled or manufactured by HAL, its functioning also needs to be scrutinised. Any nation can be proud of the Lucknow and Hyderabad units of the HAL which I have visited. But probably the Bangalore unit is not up to the mark. I must mention here that the way Mr Baljit Kapur, the former HAL chairman, was dismissed could not have enhanced the morale of the people working there. One afternoon he received a Soviet delegation at the airport which had arrived for some important discussions with HAL. That very evening. Mr Kapur was reheved of his duties and the next morning another chairman had breakfast with the delegation (it was embarrassing for the new chairman to be referred to as Mr Kapur again and agam).

And while on the subject of the air force I have never been able to understand why the director of the Staff Defence Service College at Wellington has never been an air force man or, for that matter, a navy man. The staff college at Delhi and the National Defence Academy at Pune have their directors from all the three services in rotation but the Wellington college has always had an army man. Why?

Of the three services, the highest standards for recruitment are prescribed for the IAF. This is understandable as it is the most sophisticated of the three units. Has there been any relaxation of the minimum qualifications to take in more men that have had a bearing on efficiency? Accidents, of course, will happen. But will the IAF enlighten us on its safety record compared to those of other air forces? It should take the nation into confidence, it might be for its own good. For once all the facts are known, its men in the middle and lower ranks will not have to fear that they are being put into flying coffins.



And Rolls Royces...

Susmita Gupta did an excellent job by exposing Rajneesh and his crazy followers (Vegetable, sex and song, 10 April). The cover story took us to the very heart of Rajneeshpuram in Oregon. I am glad the US immigration authorities have refused Rajneesh a permanent resident status.

T. S. Shekhar, Madras

We simple souls and mere mortals are probably more religious than this Rajneesh who believes in sex, songs, therapies and Rolls Royces. The man is dangerous because he is doing all that he is in the name of religion.

I. V. Srinivas, Bangalore

Ms Gupta's report gave a factual account of the activities of the 'bhagwan' in the USA. It would not be wrong to say that Rajneeshpuram symbolises the freedom that is synonymous with the American society. The Rajneesh

story is therefore not just a story of vegetables, sex and song; it is also the story of human freedom, tolerance and unadulterated internationalism.

B. L. Saha, Dattapukur (West Bengal)

Ms Gupta successfully exposed Rajneesh as a glorified farce. Vivek Sen, Kalyan Nagar (West Bengal)

The cover story revealed the shallow spiritualism of the 'bhagwan.' Rajneesh is surrounded by worldlyobjects (the Rolls Royce for one), but he continues to preach the Buddhist philosophy.

Imteyaz Khizar, Patna

A thrilling cover story. Materialism has certainly replaced spiritualism in the twentieth century.

Rais Ahmed, Calcutta

I don't know why SUNDAY has always tried to thrust Rajneesh on its readers. What has this 'spritual leader' achieved? What are his contributions to our society? If he has achieved anything concrete, this aspect should be highlighted by SUNDAY Dharmapada Biswal, Cuttack

The photograph on page 17 was wrongly captioned; this and the tone of the cover story displayed a marked prejudice. The photograph actually showed Rajneesh at his birthday celebrations. I wish to point out that no therapy sessions are conducted in the presence of Rajneesh at Rajneesh puram

As for the photograph on page 18, captioned "Tight embraces and bouts of kissing," it had no relevance to the report. It is difficult to understand what Sunday tried to convey through these photographs. Was Rajneesh-puram the only place in the USA where Ms Gupta found young people embracing and kissing each other?

I hope that in future Sunday will make every attempt to publish unbiased reports in order to live up to its reputation.

Anand Anubodh, Chandigarh

The bare facts

The item under ITDC hotels. Marked 上 fall (Delhi Diary, 12 February) was biased and based on hearsay. I wish to point out that once the Ashok was chosen to play host to a majority of the heads of state participating in the non-aligned meet (more than 40 of them), it had to be renovated and provided with additional services and facilities to meet the NAM requirements. As a result of this massive renovation, started about two months ago, the hotel has been operating less than half its strength of 590 rooms. For instance, in January, only 270 rooms were on sale and occupancy during the month averaged 85 per cent. And this despite the noise and inconvenience of the renovation work. Even if occupancy is related to the total strength of rooms it would constitute approximately 40 per cent. It was, therefore, highly irresponsible on Sunday's part to suggest that the occupancy had dropped to

15 per cent.

Hotel Samrat was commissioned for the Asiad guests with 80 rooms and has been in continuous operation It was surprising to be informed by Sunday that "it is yet to open its doors." As for Kanishka Hotel, the references made to it were also devoid of substance. The total worth of the wallpaper bought for this hotel was Rs 18,041, and there is no proposal to replace this with new wallpaper valued at Rs 75,000.

It would be appreciated if, in future, the facts are verified with us before

they are committed to print.

Rabindra Seth, vice-president (public relations), Indian Tourism Development Corporation Limited, New Delhi

Who's guilty?

Tavleen Singh's was an indepth study of women dacoits in India (From Putli to Phoolan, 10 April). It is clear that no one is born a dacoit, and this is particularly true of women. But I was really surprised to read superintendent of police G. S. Trivedi's remark that the police were responsible for making the mujra, girl, Putli, a notorious criminal.

G. J. J. Rao, Duliajan

It is our society which creates criminals. Women are treated like animals in our country. Nothing has been done to emancipate them. It is therefore not surprising to find that some women prefer the ravines to our 'civilised' world.

Abir Padhy, Berhampur (Orissa)

May I request SUNDAY to stop giving publicity to criminals. It is true that people like Phoolan Devi were forced by circumstances to take up arms. But shouldn't they have directed their wrath against only those who had wronged, raped or abused them? Why did they kill innocent people? In what way were those innocent victims responsible for the dacoits' plight? There is very little skill or talent required for murder; one must only be devoid of a conscience. Pray, how me we have sympathy for those who did not possess a conscience?

Sibeswar Mazumdar, Calcutta

Misfortune

Though otherwise flawless, the report by Saumitra Banerjee and Seema Guha (Assam: Blood and tears, 6 March) was incomplete insofar as it failed to get to the roots of the Assam

tragedy.

If there is any single person in India who can be held responsible for the carnage, it is Mrs Gandhi alone. It is true that President's rule could not be prolonged in Assam; but with the kind of majority Mrs Gandhi enjoys in Parliament, couldn't she have amended the Constitution in the interests of unity and communal harmony? Wasn't the Prime Minister aware that she was sitting on a volcano after having prolonged the Assam crisis for more than three years?

The report also failed to mention the fact that it was Mrs Gandhi who fanned the flames during her whirl-wind election campaign when she delivered highly provocative speeches and displayed a strange servility to the immigrants which was in sharp contrast to her apparent apathy towards the

Assamese.

Mrs Gandhi has been leading India on a course where brothers are reduced to enemies and vice versa. It would not be wrong to say that she is the country's greatest misfortune. We can only pray to God and hope that someday we will be given a capable and astute leader whose motives are beyond reproach.

Bhupendra Kainthola, Indianola (USA)

Hypocrisy and foolishness—thy name is secularism

Congratulations to Sunday for yet another indepth cover story, Rise of communalism (3 April) The team of writers commissioned to analyse the issue made a commendable effort to provide comprehensive solutions. I wish the cover story could be translated into all the major languages of our country and published in the vernacular press The younger generations have a lot to learn from the cover story. Manotosh Chaudhury, Garia (West Bengal)

An excellent cover story. It communalism is reigning supreme in any part of the world, it is here in India. Brajesh Mishra, Rourkela.

Congratulations for the special issue. The authors revealed the many aspects of communalism. I personally feel that wherever communism has failed to gain a foothold, communalism has raised its ugly head. Is it not a fact that in most communist societies, communalism does not exist?

Veli Shajahan, Trivandrum

Being a regular reader of SUNDAY I cannot help expressing my gratitude for the figures and data published with the cover story. A remarkable job indeed; it can be preserved for posterity. Lokman Hossain, Git Gram (West Bengal)

The special issue was superb. Some vested interests are adding fuel to fire in our country. We Indians ought to feel ashamed of ourselves for abetting them.

G. Venkatesan, Pudukkottai

A timely cover story. I congratulate Sunday for giving us such impressive and informative reports. Thank you. Harikrishna K Pillai, Kankmara

Once again, Sunday proved its supremacy. The cover story was simply inimitable. It is indeed a tragedy that the frenzy of communalism has gripped our country. A home ministry report has revealed that most of the communal riots (about 60 per cent of them) have their roots in petty differences and quarrels. This senseless bloodshed can be avoided if members of all communities display better sense, tolerance and understanding. We are all Indians and there should be no bad blood between us.

Upal Deb, Pandu (Assam)

Congratulations to the reporters, for their effort. Communalism reflects the inherent hatred in man. And as for the Indian Muslims, it may be true that they have suffered the most as a result of these frequent riots, but it would be wrong to say that they are being pampered and persecuted. They have not been denied their fundamental rights and they themselves have never considered India a paraya desh. India is not for the Hindus; nor is it for the Muslims. It is, in fact, a country of Indians. I pray to God to give us wisdom; may He instil in us the love for other communities.

M. Anwar Azad Ansari, Bhabua

de Br.

After independence, there was a marked increase in the incidents of communal violence. After the Emergency, havoc was let loose. The Janata government fanned the flames, and the Congress has done nothing to put out the fire. (Not a single member of the police force which has played a dominant role in communal riots, has been punished.) Moradabad put Jallanwala Bagh to shame. And that ambulance incident at Jamshedpur still haunts us

Binod Pandey, Jamshedpur

The special issue on communalism was praiseworthy. The measures to curb communal violence as suggested by Khushwant Singh under How to lance the communal virus, were welcome. Being a resident of Assam I am well aware of the role that the police force plays in communal riots. The government should take bold steps to put an end-to-bloodshed and violence Sudip Kumar Goswami, Digbot

Khushwant Singh's was a well-analysed report. Communal tension has its roots in poverty. We can solve most of our problems by eradicating poverty. It would not be wrong to say that the majority of Indians do not know much about religion. Are they aware that religion is the manifestation of divinity which already exists in man' Do they know that the Vedanta has attempted to lead us on the path of tolerance and the universal acceptance of all faiths and religions? It is said that "as the different streams, having their sources in different places, all mingle in the sea, so too the different paths that men take all lead to God."

Mr Singh rightly pointed out that the politicians are exploiting the situation to get their votes. I congratulate him for his bold suggestions and I hope that the measures he has explained will be taken seriously by the government A. N. Veera Raghavan Bombay

A marvellous analysis by Mr Singh, and an apt diagnosis of the communal virus. The remedies suggested therein should prove effective. Incidentally, I wish to point out that among the periodical that crowd the stands these days. Sex pay stands out conspicuously as an illuminating, thought provoking and unbiased weekly.

R S Nathan Cascinia 🖣

I read Mr Single's inalysis with a seconterest. But when it came to the measures to curb communal rists be aided a help viewing the author as another General Zia.

G Unnikrishnan, Cochin

The remedies suggested by Mr Singh were vague, to say the least Public flogging and similar punishments are archaic; we can hardly hope to put them to use in a democracy. Such measures can only be used in Islamic countries where there is no basic freedom granted to the citizens.

It is a pity that a journalist of Khush want Singh's calibre put forward uc' impractical suggestions

Mukul Munshi, Bombay

Though otherwise objective, Mi Singh's analysis appeared quaint. The concept of public flogging is simply revolting in the twentieth century.

I had expected Mr Singh to give us an honest assessment of communal tensions. It is an undeniable fact that the Hindus have invariably been at the receiving end, despite their docile and peace loving temperament. The government and the press continue to paint the majority community as trouble makers. Mr Singh forgot to mention the role of foreign money which has driven the minority communities to the path of extremism. His versatile pendid not condemn the Akalis, the militant Mushims and those Christians who believe in conversions.

The suggestion that the police force at the familiar trouble spots should comprise inembers of the distressed remotity communities is far from practical. It is true that police personnel are expected to help case tension by discharging their duties impartially; but is it not likely that police personnel from the minority community would be tempted to Javour their own community! I am amazed at the lack of perception on the part of Mr Singh. Are we to believe that an objective, forthright journalist like Khushwant Singh can be swept off his teet by the high tide of reactionary communalism?

Mr Singh suggested that the police force should comprise members of the community which is threatened and suffers bouts of insecurity. This is only practical where minority status and the element of "insecurity" can be established beyond doubt. Now, in the case of Assam, should the peace-keeping forces comprise, by and large, the Hmdus? Or would Mr Singh say Muslims? The Hindus are "insecure" because of the growth-rate of the Muslim population; the Muslims are "insecure" because they are still in a minority. Both communities feel equally threatened, and both have demonstrated their capacity to wreak havoc Rom K. Dev. Calcuita

K. Ramani, Madras

Mr Sirgh sanggestion of restructuring the peace keeping forces was not acquire by elementary to point or a few peaces of the few peaces of the peaces of the peace of the peac

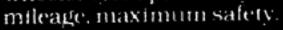
N. Hazərika, Gauhati

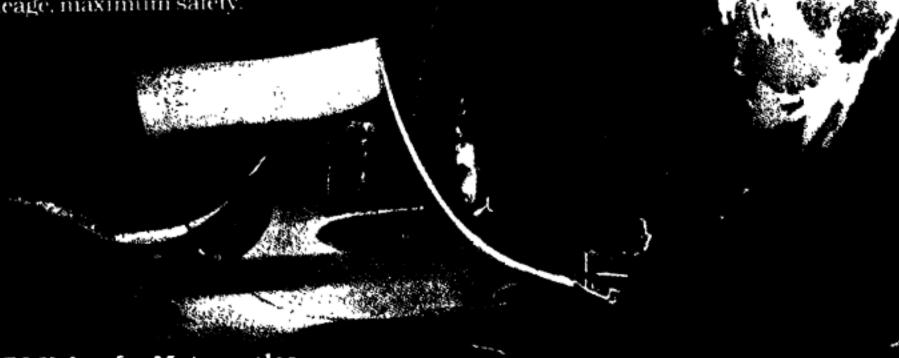
Thanks to Udayan Sharma for his effort to expose the Vishwa Hindu Parishad under Making Muslims Hindus What has happened to those who taised a hue and cry over Meenakshipuranis Why are they krepus mon ten. What may Lash is the tracter of Indian secolarism Methanimad Monaddin, Digsai

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A se stand reddle and a

This has reference to Punjab: Delusions of discrimination? by Harpal Singh Bedi. It is clear that the Akalis have been aiming at a progressively larger chunk of the national cake at the cost of the Hindus whom they blame for their imaginary grievances as the Muslim League did before partition. The Morcha leaders claim that the Sikhs are not Hindus and demand special status for the Sikhs; the Khalistan enthusiasts want their followers to believe that they are closer to the Muslims, Christians and Jews. All their political slogans have a convenient religious flavour.

The Sikhs have been pampered and now they are economically much better off than the Hindus. No other community in India has been given as much leeway as the Sikhs have. Gurdwaras are being constructed on government land and these religious places are used as sanctuaries for anti-social elements; the Sikhs, in fact, treat their Gurdwaras as states within a state. The Hindus have never objected to the prosperity of Sikhism Thet have, in fact, contributed to the growth of

Sikhism. S. L. Sahni, New Delhi

Seema Guha failed to get to The roots of the violence. Her allegations against the BJP vis-a-vis the holocaust in Assam were baseless. While it is true that communal riots did take place in those areas where BJP leaders took the platform, the clashes actually started in the areas where Mrs Gandhi and Mr Ghani Khan Choudhury had delivered provocative speeches. It is worth noting that the Prime Minister and her licutenant only visited the areas which have a sizeable East Bengali population. Mrs Gandhi took the liberty of addressing her meetings in Bengali and she ended her speeches with "Khuda hafiz" instead of the customary "Jai Hind." It is common knowledge that there was no communal frenzy in Assam before the visits of the Prime Minister and the railway minister. I cannot understand how Ms Guha chose to hold the BJP, RSS, etc. responsible for the Assam violence Poresh Kharghoria, Jorhat

The BIP was not responsible for the carnage. What the leaders of this party said is absolutely correct. We must throw out the immigrants from Assam before they start ruling us in our own state. The BJP only told us to unite against the Muslim foreigners; they did not tell us to kill them. We adopted violent means because we realised that as long as Mrs Gandhi lives or remains in power, we will never be able to get rid of her vote bank in Assam. As soon as Mrs Gandhi is thrown out of power and a Janata government is installed, the average Assamese will take to the Gandhian path once again. Sandeep Kumar Barooah, Dibrugarh

It is true that communal organisations like the RSS and the Jamaat began spreading their poison after the foreigners' issue surfaced; but it is wrong to say that these organisations have a sizeable, following in Assam. Pradeep K. Goswami, Gauhati

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Considering that even Shahi Imam exonerated the Hindus, I cannot understand how Ms Guha blamed the RSS and BJP for the Assam tragedy. Was it a case of over-simplifying a complex issue?

Most of the opposition parties, the BIP included, had opposed the Assam elections. But the Congress(1) went right ahead and conducted the elections at gunpoint. Public opinion went against Mrs Gandhi and everyone condemned her--except, of course, Sun-DAY correspondent, Seema Guha.

Can we deny that people like the late Fakhruddın Alı Ahmed and former CM Anowara Taimur encouraged East Bengalis to settle in Assam? Can we deny that the sanctity of citizenship was thrown to the winds by that undeclared policy of allowing illegal settlements in Assam? It has been alleged that these illegal immigrants used to vote in India and in Bangladesh Now Mrs Gandhi talks about a "foreign hand." And to make matters worse, Ms Guha blames the BJP and RSS.

J. Mathew, Calcutta

A completely one-sided report. Ms Guha tried to prove that the BIP was perhaps stronger than the Congress(I) and the AASU in Assam while the state was under President's rule. No one but Mrs Gandhi was responsible for the outbreak of violence in Assam. K. Choudhury, Silchar

I wish to clarify that the AASU and AGSP never defined the suspected foreigners as Muslims. The concept of "suspected foreigners are Muslims" came into being after the BJP began supporting the agitation. As for the AAMSU, it is not the student organisation of the Muslims A large number of Hindus are also members of this organisation. The AAMSU general secretary is a Hindu.

The Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Hind was not the only organisation which asked the Muslims to go out and vote. The Congress(I) and a few other parties also urged the population to participate in the elections. They were promised security by the Congress(1); but as it transpired, the security measures were far from adequate.

It is wrong to compare the activities of AAMSU with those of the RSS or the BJP. AAMSU is not a communal orga-

Panu Chakravarty, Gauhati

Ms Guha failed to reflect on the other side of the coin On her election tour Mrs Gandhi had concluded one of her speecheswith "Khuda hafiz," betraying thereby the very principle of secularism. As for Ghani Khan Choudhury, the less said the better.

Now the time has come for all Indians to wake up from their slumber. It is time they realised that the Assam movement is neither communal nor secessionist. It is a movement directed against foreigners, not against the Indians as some foolish politicians have claimed. The movement does not recognise the religious beliefs of the foreigners. A foreigner is a foreigner, regardless of his faith or the language which he speaks.

A. Sonowal, Dibrugarh

Ms Guha's was an old wine in a new bottle. Weren't the same photographs published in the 6 March issue of Sunday? Surely Ms Guha could have unearthed something new: for instance, details of the role played by Ghani Khan Choudhury -

Sangeetha Subramaniam, Bhubaneswar

Barring Rajendra Sareen, none of the others took the issue seriously. The treatment was, by and large, superficial. In this context, it is worth recalling Asoka Mehta's remark at a seminar on secularism in November 1965: "A rational solution to the problem of secularism is possible only through rational analysis. However the present practice of phoney courtesy in behaviour is most deplorable. We have now reached a stage where we can talk freely but with an objectivity. Infected parts will have to be operedap and then only would the cure of the disease be possible."

As long as Muslim orthodoxy exists, any attempt to strike at Hindu obscurantism is bound to fail. It is difficult to accept secularism in its present form-a form in which it merely implies tolerance of and indirect encouragement to obscurantist Islam.

The need of the hour is to expose the communal elements, regardless of whether they are Hindus or Muslims. Muslims should be encouraged to accept modern education. So far, the vested interests have exploited the backwardness of Indian Muslims; they have thwarted their development and led them on the path of fundamentalism.

Anıl Kumar Gupta, Meerut

We have a tendency to take a slightly warped view of communalism. Let us. therefore, begin afresh by calling a spade a spade. The Muslims fought for Pakistan and created that country by force. But unfortunately—and thanks to the magnanimity of Gandhi-millions of Muslims stayed back in India The implications of this situation were that the Indian Muslims would accept the concept of secularism and the Hindus would tolerate their 'Brutus community ' But the Muslims turned out to be tar too militant and too huge a community to accept submission; the Hindus were too disillusioned to revive their love for the Muslims or to rejoice over the special status accorded to the Muslims.

Sanjay Kumar, Muzaffarpur

We are all ashamed of the mindless and purposeless killing of both Hindus and Muslims in Assam But I am very sorry to point out that SUNDAY has unnecessarily tried to keep the hatred alive by publishing the cover transparency of an old Muslim displaying the skulls of his murdered relatives. The photograph was clearly contrived because it showed three to four-year-old skulls (confirmed by a forensic expert known to me) when the Assam carnage took place barely two months ago.

The staff of Suspay should be put behind bars and the magazine should be shut down by the government. Krishna Kaveri Patnaik, Cuttack



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Rajasthan

The starvation that the government continues to deny

MADHU JAIN toured the drought-affected districts of this state to report that hundreds of people, starved of food and water, are dying. Photographs by KAMAL SAHAI

he sun was almost at its zenith when the jeep which had been moving through the impossible desert terrain suddenly jerked to a halt. We were in the middle of nowhere: 20 kilometres behind us was Sam, and in front was the hard, hot desert with the shifting sands, stretching to eternity.

There was no food and little water. As the sun shone down harsher, gnawing pains in the stomach began. Here we were on the hunger trail, in search of a story on the drought which was killing people in the hundreds in Rajasthan. And they were all hungry. One had to feel hunger to

write about it.

One would never of course be able to feel the hunger of that one lone figure we met in the desert in those long hours we waited for a rescue jeep. We heard his racking cough a good ten minutes before we saw that bent old figure inching his way towards us leading an equally fragile looking camel. Jame Khan, 70 (he looked a great deal older and was suffering from tuberculosis), was coming from Sam with five kilogrammes of bajra ka atta on his camel's back. His village was yet another 40 kilometres away and he had already trudged 15 km. It takes him four days of walking to get those five kilos of bajra-the only food he knows and has been able to eat for the last four years of continuous drought in west Rajasthan.

Khan had first gone to Dabri, the

village located one-third of the way between Sam and Lunar, the last outpost, four kilometres from the Pakistan border in Jaisalmer district. But the ration shop was empty. It had been so for the last five months. Jame Khan did not even have enough money to buy a water container. He hurriedly, noisily guzzled down the little water we could

In the jeep escorting us were Mr Chandra Vir Singh, Jaisalmer's sole MLA (an MLA with the largest con-

A bleary-eyed child sits beside his mother: on the brink of death



stituency in the country: Jaisalmer, 38,000 sq kilometres is bigger than the entire state of Kerala) and his uncle, Mr Hukum Singh. Mr Hukum Singh is the younger brother of the former maharaja of Jaisalmer while Mr Chandra Vir Singh, of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is the son

of the former maharaja.

I asked Jame Khan if he knew the MLA or his uncle. Khan shook his head slowly and said that he had heard of neither. Nor had he heard of the government or its famine relief works. All he knew was his hunger and his tiredness. He could not even loan us his camel for a sum of money; the camel was equally tired. Looking at Jame Khan, the words of the official in Jodhpur, whom we met just before setting off for the drought-affected areas began to echo in my ears: "Madam," he had said, "nobody is dying of hunger. There was an unexpected cold wave. People who had measles contracted pneumonia...and only the old died. They had to die anyway...look at these people, they refuse to take any medicine. They were given capsules costing Rs 15 each which a common man cannot afford. They did not have money to buy them..."

Jame Khan was not dead yet. Nor had that Rs 15 capsule reached him. He was an old man. But, why can't an old man have the right to die a normal death? The official would have had a different version if Khan had been his uncle or father or one of those on the lists which were appearing in the local dailies who were dying in isolated hamlets, mainly in Pokharan tehsil. If the figures were correct, the death toll

Gopi gropes for milk when there is none

should have reached over 500 by mid-April and summer has yet to show its fury. The reports of course suddenly had the sleepy Rajasthan government on its feet: teams of medical doctors and experts were rushed to the spots including from as far away as the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, to the "crisis spots." And so were the district officials.

Their findings: no starvation deaths had occurred. Only measles and post-measles complications had caused the deaths. On 14 April the Rajasthan chief minister, Mr Shiv Charan Mathur, and the chief secretary, Mr Mali, both issued statements categorically denying the fact that there had been any "starvation" deaths. The Jaisalmer collector, Mr. Vyas, who had been quoted in the papers as saying that the hungry farmers had started to eat grass, was, it seems, reportedly called to Jaipur by the chief secretary and told to retract his statement.

Mr Vyas was probably quoted out of context. The villagers have not started eating grass, yet, since there is not much of it any way. But they are eating tus or toomba, the seeds of a bitter lemon-like fruit which has to be boiled for four days before it becomes edible and that too only after it is mixed with bajra to make

it last longer.

That was the official line no starvation deaths. Death by illness, certainly. A smug official in Pokharan had said: "These people are orthodox and refuse treatment ...ural literacy is only nine per cent ..." Why should the rural literacy rate be so low? Why had the government been so lethargic in opening new

schools? How then could one define the deaths which came after five years of malnutrition making people vulnerable to most diseases? Worse, these people were out of the reach of any doctors. Doctors, on the other hand, do not want to trouble themselves by going to the outlying areas. In the 22 health sub-centres in Jaisalmer district, 10 posts are vacant—this is an official figure, it could even be more.

No amount of statistics, doctors' reports, and official explanations will wipe away that image of the little baby in Chhayan village, well over 50 kilometres from Pokharan---20 kilometres of it a dust track, specked with the occasional carcass of cattle or camel. Gops, not quite a vear old, tugged furiously at his mother's blouse groping for her breasts. But there was no milk in his mother's breasts. The little arms from which the flesh had worn off and the wrinkled hands struggled on regardless Neero, his mother, had been ill for the last six months. Her husband, Fatch Singh, had been ill even longer. He would just stick his tongue out to show how sick he was. Their kitchen lay empty. Just the day before, after all the reports in the press had appeared, grain had been distributed in the worst-off fanalies. Neero had been lucky: she had got five kgs of wheat.

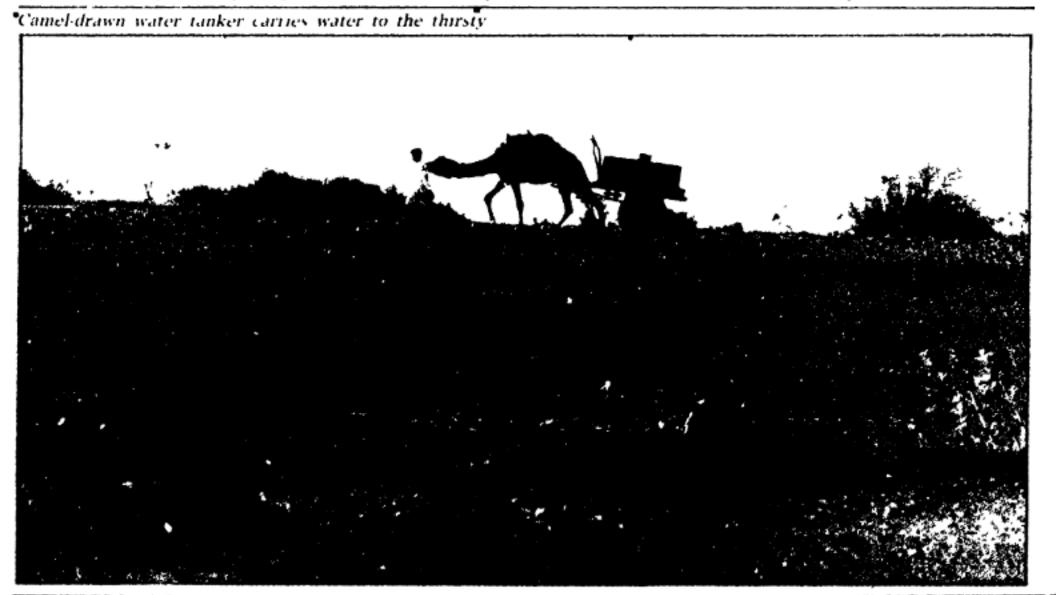
But grain was not what they needed just then. Medical attention was their first priority: they had all gone beyond hunger. The medical centre at Chhayan had opened on 28 July 1976. It closed down the same day

We reached Chhayan on 19 April 1983. A compounder had come to Chhayan two days before that. But he was too late. In February, 11 people had died. In March: 15. By 19 April: another two. Most of them were babies and children, although quite a few adults' names were listed in the sarpanch's death register.

One of first reactions of the state government, or of the voluntary rehef organisations, is to send bags of grain. The Rajasthan government also has a system of leaving five kilogrammes of grain with the sarpanch to give to anyone who is starving. But, he has to make sure they are starving! The other reflex action of the government is to organise famine relief work. This year if a labourer "digs" the given slot, ten sq ft by five sq ft, he gets Rs seven a day. That is enough, according to the government, to keep him or her from starving (it is usually her because the women of Rajasthan seem to be doing all the hard work from bringing the water from distant wells to famme reliet work).

All this sounds impressive on paper Officials will tell you that so many thousands of rupees have been sanctioned for famme relief work (eg: Bhilwara: 456 works sanctioned, Rs 509 98 Takhs until mid-March, etc.) but the truth hes elsewhere. There are labourers who are being paid as little as 75 paise a day. Between the labourer and the promised Rs seven (it is cruel that they are paid after a fortnight) are many obstacles corrupt contractors; a hard, unyielding ground, and their own, weak bodies. The officials seem to forget that this is famine relief work. How can a hungry and ill man work as hard as one who is not.

It is not only inhuman, but now



perhaps illegal as well. A few months ago Justice Bhagwati, in a Supreme Court case concerning a group of labourers doing famine relief work on a road near Ajmer who were being paid much less than Rs seven, said that the minimum wages had to be paid regardless of the amount of work done. Otherwise, the Supreme Court judge said, it was "forced labour."

The other relief measure is to ask people to go to the Rajasthan Canal to work. Huge advertisements 'exhorting the people' keep appearing in the local dailies. But, the villagers are reluctant to go. First, they find it difficult to leave behind their sick relatives or livestock. Second, they are confused. Do they first go to Bikaner and register themselves, or go straight to the site? Moreover, many of them have heard horror stories about contractors running away with money-one at Awai is said to have vanished with Rs two lakhs recently. There are also stories about women being exploited. Unlike villagers in other states, there is a reluctance on the part of people in the area to leave their homes however far-flung or forlorn they might be. The Rajasthan Canal chalo call did not appeal to most of the villagers we spoke to. They would rather remain where they are and perish.

Drought has become so much a part of life in Rajasthan that people have to shout about their hunger from rooftops or crawl on all fours and beg before they are heard in Jaipur or Delhi. Or, perhaps, even in the district headquarters. Jaipur fiddles while Rajasthan starves. Yet, one would think that when drought has become endemic (in Barmer district alone, 835 of the 865 villages are drought-stricken this year, according to the Barmer administration; last year only 633 villages were, drought-affected), there would be an effective famine relief department; a department which would anticipate drought, as well as make sure that all the water supply schemes so grandioselydrawn up on paper both exist and function. In many of the villages we visited, either the tankers came only once a month, or not at all. Or, the pipelines were broken or usually ran dry, or there was no electricity to run the tube wells, or the hand pumps had become useless, or the water was too bitter or...The list is endless.

The price of cattle is a fairly reliable index of just how bad the drought really is. On 21 September 1982, at the cattle fair in Setrava, Shergarh district, a pair of bullocks was sold for as little as Rs 20. The price this year must have fallen. Further, some villagers said it is Rs five to Rs ten a pair. Many cattle have died, the Barmer bureaucrats said that in their district alone 25 lakh cattle had been affected. Cattle are even being smuggled across the



A little boy with kher fruits in his hand. The fruits are eaten when the bajra runs out

border to Pakistan where they can fetch over Rs 500. Villagers who can no longer afford to feed their cows often let them go astray. Occasionally, smugglers take these cows across the border and the Barmer police and the Border Security Force have caught an estimated 1,000 cattle over the last year While cowprotection centres are springing up, funded and aided by private organisations, less is, perhaps, being done for human beings.

In Rajasthan, people do not like to admit their hunger or poverty. Their despair is quiet. It is a question of izzat. In fact, when the chief minister and the chief secretary denied that there were any starvation deaths

many of the villagers in Pokharan said that the chief minister was "saving" their izzat—putting a purdah to cover their destitution. I was often warned, "Don't ask people directly if they have sold their utensils or land or have gone to the money lenders." But I did and discovered that this year the situation is so bad that izzat was beginning to take a back seat.

Land was being sold for ridiculously low prices: Rs 20 a bigha in Pokharan. But jewellery was the first to go. Moneylenders usually charged anything from Rs three to Rs five as interest per month for every Rs 100 borrowed. But this year many of them have stopped loaning money; they knew it would never be returned. Many of the villagers possessed only one set of clothes. Their kitchens had been gradually depleted of utensils and shining brassware.

The people of Rajasthan, used to the desert and hard times, are resilient. They usually share what they have: people from other states would have perished long ago. But if the rains do not come this year the drought of 1968-69 will be repeated. Only this time it will be worse. There is another factor going against the Rajasthanis: their poverty is deceptive. Proud and beautiful in colours which defy the desert, they always appear picturesque and gay even when they are crumbling within.

The first reports of "starvation deaths" to appear were from Chauhatan, in Barmer district. Newspaper reports on 12 April put the death toll at 38 for the following villages: Nehtrar, Pararia, Goliar, Konera

Konera.

The population comprised mainly

This is a magnified picture of the insect-ridden wheat, originally from FCI foodstocks, being supplied to the people



Bhils, Bambis, Meghwals who are Raiputs, own on an average 50 to 100 bighas of land. When 1' rains they grow bajra, moong, jawar, when it doesn't, there is nothing. On the road to Nethra we stopped Sadiq, a far mer, who was going back home after a day's work in his fields. He had 96 bighas of land, but hardly enough to provide a meal a day for his wife and two children. Only half the land was cultivable, he told us. And he had already sold 11 bighas to buy grain for his family "I have no more cattle left, they have died I should have got at least Rs 250 a bigha, but I got not even Rs 400 for six bighas

It was almost the same story in Nethra village. The land had been rendered useless each consecutive year, the cattle were dying, and the young men who had taken the cattle to grazing grounds in Gujarat, Punjab or Uttar Pradesh, after waiting for the rains to come until August, tended to stay away longer each year One of the panches, Chintaman Das, told us that a well dug 32 years earlier had dried four years ago. "It was never really made pucca." A tanker had been built a year ago, but the water only came every ten days or so from the 'vater supply source scheme. Said Devram Chaudhury. "I have only two or three cattle left Ten years ago I had ten. Now we cannot sell them for more than Rs 5 to Rs 10..."

Amaru (45) with a family of six children said: "I sold the jewels and utensils four years ago. All I have is what I am wearing. I will have to sell this now. When I sold my bartans (utensils) to the bania, I should have got Rs 10 but he only gave me four rupees.."

Leaving behind Nethra we went to the sarpanch of Chauhatan, Mr Kanwar Lal, a tall, sturdy man. He offers us cashewnuts and cold drinks (a bit difficult to swallow after what we had seen) and tells us: "The chief minister has rightly said: the sarpanches now give news of people dying Didn't people always die?"

Next stop: Barmer. Barmer has six MLAs, all from the Congress(I). One Lok Sabha seat which covers Barmer, Jarsalmer and Shergarh is in the hands of the Congress(I). Famine relief work is in full swing, as we could see on the road 30 roads have been sanctioned for famine relief: in 1982-83 1,060 works sanctioned, cost estimate so far Rs 83 crores. A total number of 171 villages have 44 tankers, 81 have wells

Jaisalmer, 16 April. We first meet Mr Chandra Vir Singh (BJP), Jaisalmer's sole MLA. He talks about the politics of famine. "You can see that the constituencies of the ministers are well looked after, Jaisalmer is torgotten" He goes through a sheat of papers: "Bhilwara, the chief minister's constituency with a population of 11 lakhs has 456 works sanctioned. Jaisalmer, with over two lakh people has only 43 works"

His uncle, Mr Hukum Singh, Jaisalmer's MLA from 1957 to 1967 adds; "It is a close coterie, the CM and his ministers. In districts like Jodhpur and Barmer, every village has two or three famine relief works. Just look at Shergarh, which is the health minister, Mr Keth Singh Rathore's constituency, next to Pokharan district. Bhakri village has nothing. No relief works. Whereas on the other side.."

Mr Chandra Vir Singh, then turns to the topic of water "Tankers have to go to Bikaner to be repaired, 64 tankers were sanctioned for 284 villages, 30 per cent to 40 per cent of them are inoperative. Over 20 tubewells have been electrified, but even the officials admit that pillars are rotten and fall down. If a pipeline is broken, it takes almost a week to be repaired. This place is in a sort of no-man's land. One of the engmeers belongs to Jodhpur district, the other to Jaisalmer and they keep passing the buck, nothing gets repaired '

Next comes the subject of cattle

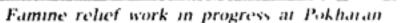
fodder: "The official requirement is 21 lakh quintals. There is only 60,000 quintals. 30 per cent of which is old and inedible even for the cows."

On the subject of medical facilities Mr Singh said: "There are nine medical rural sub-centres of which only two are still working Khatori, opened in 1959, is still running, Chhayan in 1976, closed down the day it opened. Uljan was opened on 25 March 1977 but it closed down the same day. Awai, opened in 1980, closed in 1981; Chandan, opened in 1978 is still open. Nedai became operative in 1960, closed down in 1978. Chelak which was opened 4 May 1979 closed down the same day. Rasala, opened in 1968, closed in 1979, Habur, opened in 1968, now

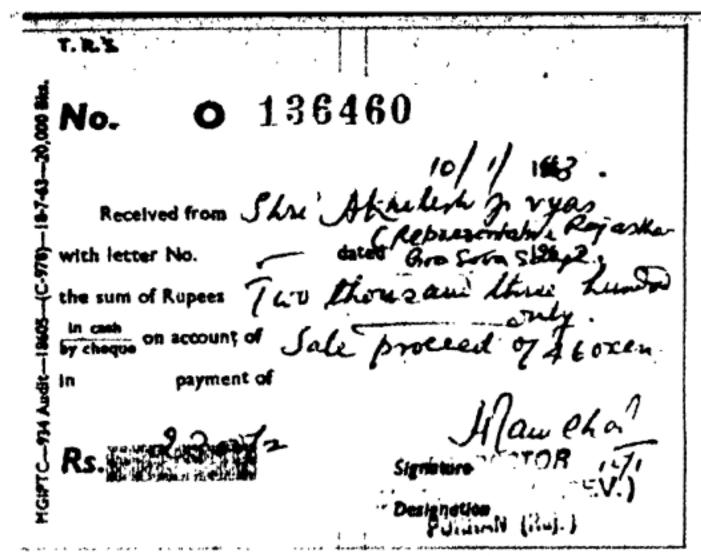
inoperative.. '

The MLA continued: "in 1980, posts for 26 doctors were sanctioned of which five are vacant. Four posts for male nurses, grade one, were sanctioned. Only one is working. And of 27 posts for male nurses, grade two, sanctioned, 25 posts are vacant. There is no paramedical staff either. It is no wonder that the doctors don't come here...(the foundation stone laid for the Pokharan hospital five years ago is as far as the building ever got) "The health minister has admitted in the Assembly that TB is increasing in west Rajasthan. There is one TB hospital, but there is no isolation ward. I can tell you that if you were to do a study of the police lines in Jaisalmer, you would see that 70 per cent of the constables have TB ... " Said Mr Hukum Singh: "I remember it used to be said in the old days that after Kasauli, Jaisalmer was the most healthy place. There was no TB. But malnutrition has changed all this. We had all the butter, milk. Now whatever milk we produce goes to Delhi. The vitamin tablets given to the poor end up in the markets of Bombay."

The first village, 20 kilometres from Jaisalmer where we stopped was Damodra Jeemaand Mina, two women whom we met at the reservoir where they had come to draw water said that the pipeline was laid 12 years ago, but there has been no water in it for the last 10 years. The only water available to them was in the reservoir which is filled by a tanker every three days. The hand pump lay idle: "Not even a bird will drink this water, it is so bitter." The men were idle; there was no famine relief work here, many of the cattle had died. Our next stop, Kanoi, was 40 kilometres from Jaisalmer. The villagers said that 50 per cent of their cattle had died this year; that the condition this year was, the worst in a long time. Said Virat Singh, "Mrs Gandhi came here in 1980 when there was famine. Two days before she came 400 labourers were employed. Two days after she left, 60 labourers were left at the







Photostat copy of receipt for sale of 46 oxen for Rs 2300

A leaf from the sarpanch's death register in Chhayan

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famine relief work, 40 days later, nobody...What shall we do, go to Pakistan? Earlier, there was no problem, the cattle went to the Indus belt not more than 100 kilometres away when there was famine. Now we have to go to the Ganges belt, and even the Chambal...Lunar is four km from the Pakistan border. Across it, a bit further, is Amarkot. Ten km outside this village on the sand dunes is a broken water supply pipeline, which could not make it to Lunar. As soon as we entered the village a crowd collected. Nobody ever comes to Lunar. The last collector, they said, came over four years ago. District officials never make it beyond half-way across the desert. Said an angry Kanraj Singh: "The government of India has forgotten us...they think that we are in Pakistan..."

This isolated village has no medical facilities, no clean water, nor enough food. The nearest ration shop is at Dabri, 30 km of difficult desert terrain away, and no grain has reached this place for the last five months. Those who fall sick have enough strength to ride a camel for a day and half to Sam, or just pray to God and hope for a miracle. Antar Singh (45) died in March, he could afford neither food, nor could he make that trip to Sam.

Sixty-year-old Bhank Singh was once one of the richest men in this village. Today he is left with a lota and cot in the corner of his cousin's house. He sold his land in the 1968-69 famine, his wife's jewellery three years ago and the utensils the year before. He is merely waiting for death to relieve him of his misery of hunger and illness.

Lunar's population consists of 60 per cent Rajputs; the rest is divided equally between the Sindhi Muslims and Meghwals. The last are the worst off. Most of the children were potbellied and had rickety legs. But the most horrifying sight was of the one-year-old child, Sumera, who had the wrinkles of an old man. His bones could be seen protruding beneath the wrinkled skin. For Sumera, death was only a step away. His mother Phoola, a widow, had a broken hand and foot, both unattended They sat apart in a little room dependent totally on the crumbs their relatives would give to them. It had now become a count by mouth: Phoola's mother had taken away the other child for she had food enough for only one more mouth.

Phoola was clearly beyond hope: the hundred-rupee note we gave her, more I suppose to assuage our own conscience, did not make any difference to her. It could easily have been just a piece of paper. Looking at her one of the Rajputs said: "We die a dog's death here...tarap, tarap ke marte hai...If there is no famine relief this summer, we will die like flies...." Said yet another: "Give us cattle fodder, we will eat it..."

Can India conquer her weaknesses?

AMARTYA SEN, Drummond Professor of Political Economy in Oxford University, takes a look at India to assess her strength and weaknesses.

India's reputation as a land of riches is as ancient as the history of its poverty. That mixed reputation has changed in recent centuries, and internationally India is seen these days as a land of poverty, tamines, disease, squalor, caste, untouchability, separatism, and chaos. This reputation, while exaggerated, is not undeserved. But things don't stay stationary. We have to ask which way is India going? A sixth of humanity is involved.

I start with the economy. What did India look like at the time of independence in 1947? It was poor, obviously, but, more strikingly, almost completely stagnant. In fact, many estimates suggest that a sizeable economic decline took place during the last decades of British rule. In these years Indian food output per head was falling, despite the rather low growth of population (around one per cent a year).

The average expectation of life at birth in newly independent India was a mere thirty-three years. India also experienced a gigantic tamine in 1943, shortly before independence; this killed around three million people. While the Great Bengal Famine was not directly related to the decline in the amount of food available per head (since it took place at a time when there was a comparatively good aggregate food supply), it brought out the disastrous vulnerability of several occupation groups in the Indian population to the vagaries of economic fluctuations.

Judged against this background, India's economic performance since independence is bound to appear quite creditable. Its national product has grown steadily faster than population, and the process has speeded up—and it is comfortably ahead of the population growth of about two per cent. Agriculture, no longer stationary, has grown sufficiently for India to be self-sufficient in most years and often more than that. Some regions within the country, e.g., Punjab, have grown at rates high enough to compare with the fast-growing economies in the Far East. The popular world image of India as a model of Malthusian decline survives, but the reality is different.

There have been no major famines since independence. While droughts and floods have threatened famine (for example, in Bihar in 1968, in Maharashtra in 1971-73, in West Bengal in 1978), public action has prevented a traditional catastrophe from taking place. Life expectancy at birth has gone up from thirty-three years to fifty-two years. While the fall in the death rate led initially to a sharp increase in the rate of population growth, that growth has recently been declining because the birthrate has been falling. It still has a long way to fall, and there is little cause for smugness, especially since China and Sri Lanka have achieved so much more in reducing the birthrate than India has. But even the relatively moderate fall in birthrate from 44 to 36 per thousand during the last two decades has now given India the third lowest birthrate among the "low-income economies." Some regions in India, especially Kerala, have been more successful in cutting down the birthrate than have others

The post-independence period has also seen some far-reaching changes in the legality of the caste system, and these have included making the practice of untouchability a criminal offence. India has been many years ahead of the West in introducing its own programmes of affirmative action and positive discrimination. The Constitution of the republic of India, which came into force in 1950, two-and-a-half years after independence, makes explicit provision for such actions. In the civil service a substantial number of jobs have been reserved for members of the "scheduled castes"officialese for traditional "untouchable" groups and scheduled tribes. As a temporary measure, a proportion of seats in the Lok Sabha were reserved for "untouchables" (the others being "general" seats open to all citizens). The same was done in the Legislatures of the states. The number of "untouchables" in positions of power and influence has grown rapidly under these "positively discriminatory" arrangements.



Indian society is a deeply troubled one, with extreme injustices heaped upon dreadful inequities.

Ever since independence, it has been feared that, in view of its regional diversities, India would soon break up... But this has not happened.

It all this sounds like a propaganda handout by a pro-India lobby, I should warn that I will presently argue that Indian society is a deeply troubled one, with extreme injustices heaped upon dreadful inequities. But we cannot begin to view India's problems and failures intelligently without acknowledging what has been

The expansion of science and technology in India including nuclear power—has received some comment lately. It has been pointed out that "by some estimates" India "ranks next to the United States and the Soviet Union in its number of highly trained nuclear scientists." India's higher education sector is vast. In the number of students enrolled in higher education as a percentage of the population aged twenty to twentyfour, not only is India a considerable distance ahead of any other country of comparable income level, but there is in fact no country with even twice India's per capita income that comes anywhere close to its higher education ratio. In China, for example, the number of students in institutions of higher education is about one per cent of the corresponding age group, whereas in India that ratio is eight per cent. In the number of doctors per unit of population, India is second only to China among all countries having income per head no higher than twice India's.

I ought to discuss two other achievements of some importance before 1 take up the bad news. Ever since independence, it has been feared that, in view of its regional diversities, India would soon break up. It has also been doubted whether India is, in any sense, one country. The inevitability of disintegration was most plausibly argued But this has not happened. The so-called "most dangerous decades" have come and gone. There have been regional tensions, but the social, cultural, and economic bonds have proved to be too strong to snap-or even come close to snapping. I believe the historical basis of Indian unity is often underestimated by those who attribute to the innocent British the creation of a sense of "Indianness," which in fact has deeper roots. The first volume of the recently published Cambridge Economic History of India, edited by Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, brings out the extent of social and economic integration that obtained in pre-British India.

There are, of course, several peripheral groups, e.g., the numerically small but politically important tribes in extreme northeast India, and retaining their loyalty has often involved the use of force-even brutality. However, for most of the country separatism has proved to be a very weak force much overestimated by "experts," foreign and domestic. While various internal rearrangements (such as revision of interstate divisions) have occurred, the nation of two-thirds of a billion people. with 14 major languages, has survived remarkably

intact.

The second achievement concerns the effects of the oil crisis and the world recession. India is dependent on oil imports, though attempts have been made recently to find more oil within the country. Despite the hike of oil prices in 1973, which expanded India's import bill remarkably, its foreign exchange earnings also increased rapidly. While India's terms of trade declined sharply with the rise in oil prices, the volume of its exports increased much faster than the volume of its imports through the Seventies. India also earned large remittances from Indians working abroad, especially in the Middle East. India has had more difficulty in coping with the second round of oil price rises, in the late

Seventies, but all in all it has weathered the storm remarkably well. And in recent years-despite the world recession—the Indian economy has grown at an unusually rapid rate. Taken together these achievements are certainly impressive. What is the other side of the story?

66 Peak of me as I am," said Othello. To apply the Same principle to India today offers much scope for criticism. One can, for example, point out that India's long-term average growth has been much lower than the world average; that Indian agriculture has got by with some help from good monsoons in recent years; that one reason India has weathered the oil crisis so well is that it is relatively near to the Middle East. Even as it has suffered from the rise in oil prices, India has benefited from the consequent shift in world income from the West to the Middle East, which has been much more inclined

to buy Indian goods, services, and skills.

These facts, however, do not really detract from India's achievements. Judged historically, the speeding up of Indian economic expansion from, at best, just about one per cent at the time of independence, to three to 3.5 per cent and rather higher more recently cannot be dismissed merely by noting that it is only recently that India's performance has become internationally respectable, partly as a result of lower growth of the rest of the world. Nor can the monsoons—on close analysis be seen to be the only major influence on the change in India's growth performance. And insofar as India has put the Middle Eastern boom to good use, it has been able to do this because of its potential for domestic production, the availability of skilled and semi-skilled workers, and a willingness to seize economic opportunities as they arise. The real blots on India's performance lie else

One of the major blots is the survival of regular malnutrition-as distinct from acute starvation and famines—in most parts of India. At least a third of the

rural population seems to suffer from nutritional inade. quacies. The deprivation is especially common for landless rural labourers, whose entitlement to food in the market economy of India rests on their ability to sell their labour and buy food. Depending on the varying chances for employment and relative prices, a great many of these families remain hungry a lot of the time. This class of rural wage labourers has been the tradition-

al victim of South Asian families (e.g., the Great Bengal Famine of 1943, the famine in neighbouring Bangladesh in 1974). While this class has not had to face a famine in post-independence India. it has had to live with regular

malnutrition and endenuc hunger.

Estimates of poverty in India are usually related to nutritional norms such as the amount of calories people need. There have been a great many controversies among Indian economists and nutritionists on the choice of such norms (even on whether they are meaningful at all) as well as on the use of these norms for statistical analyses of India's performance in relieving poverty. While some estimates show an increase in poverty despite economic growth, others suggest a slight amelioration of the incidence of poverty. But there is no picture whatsoever of a decisive change for the better.

India's "self-sufficiency" in food has to be assessed in the light of the limited purchasing power of the Indian masses. Their needs may be large, but their "entitlements" in the market are small, that the economy produces enough to meet their market demand is not in itself a gigantic achievement. There has been no great "shortage" in the market -- no "crisis" to deal with -- but at least a third of the rural population has regularly and quietly-gone to bed hungiv and malnourished. The government has been able to ignore this endemic hunger because that hunger has neither led to a run on the market, and chaos, nor grown into an acute famine with people dying of starvation. Persistent orderly hunger does not upset the system

Could India have done otherwise? It could be arguedindeed it is argued—that given the extremely low level of income from which India has started, it could not really do anything else until economic growth put the Indian people at a different level of economic prosperity altogether. Does that argument hold up? The contrast with China is relevant here, but that raises a great many complex issues, some of which I shall take up later. Fewer problems are posed by a comparison with Sri Lanka, which belongs to the same region and has a political system not far different from India's.

For a long time now Sri Lanka has followed the policy of providing extensive social services, including distribution of subsidised rice. The nature of that subsidy has varied over the years—sometimes cheaper rice was made available for all, at other times some rice was given free to anyone qualifying by a means test. While Sri Lanka's per capita income is of the same order of magnitude as that of India and Pakistan, and its total amount of avaliable food (measured in calories) per unit of population is also quite comparable, cases of endemic hunger are much rarer in Sri Lanka than in the subcontinent. And the expectation of life at birth in Sri Lanka-estimated to be about sixty-nine years-is far closer to the figures of rich countries than to those of India and Pakistan (fifty-two and fifty years respectively). The rice policy is by no means the only factor responsible for the difference, but it has certainly contributed substantially to the result, and the general programme of government-financed social services-of which the rice policy and medical provisions are part—

has worked powerfully in that direction. It is thus not quite the case that India's overall poverty rules out all policies other than the one it has followed Food subsidies in Sri Lanka have cost no more than five per cent of its GNP, and if they were similarly expensive in India, they would have amounted to less than just one year's growth of GNP. at India's current rate of growth. But India's approach to social services has, in fact, beer sadly unimaginative and breathtakingly conservative. The deal that the government of India struck recently with the International Monetary Fund, leading to the approval of the largest loan (exceeding \$five billion) that the IMF has ever given to any country, seems to involve a pattern of development that includes a further move in the direction of the no-nonsense South Korean model and that will have the effect of excluding ambitious programmes of social services. There is not much reason to doubt that this type of policy can bring dividends in high economic growth, but its impact on the quality of life will be slow. It is worth noting that South Korea, with five and a half times the per capita income of Sri Lanka, still has a slightly lower expectation of life than Sri Lanka. Nevertheless, the Indian leaders seem to have clearly decided on a strategy focused on growth,

That conservatism happens to fit quite well with the elitist character of Indian society and politics. The powerful groups have much to gain from high growth. If intensive public efforts were made to eliminate endemic malnutrition immediately, that would benefit groups that are less powerful. It is important to understand the elitist nature of India to make sense of India's policies. The elite groups in India are remarkably powerful, and while they are a small minority of a nation of 700 million people, they are still numerically large. The elite must not be confused with just the industrial leaders or the bourgeoisie. It includes, among others, millions of civil servants, business people, commercial farmers, educa-

with an astonishingly conservative approach to social

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In view of the price that India has to pay for its political system, it could be asked: are these liberties worth it? Would not better feeding, clothing and health for the Indian population compensate for the loss of liberty which after all effectively concerns only a minority?

tors, office workers, and small landowners. In fact, it includes many people who are themselves poor by international standards.

Nor is it the case that the Indian elite is unenlightened, or indifferent to the rest of the community. The moral and political consciousness of the Indian elite does not permit, for example, a major famine in India, and when a serious famine threatens, public intervention is swift and effective. Even reports on pockets of acute starvation by probing journalists—and there are many excellent ones in India—get prominent attention in newspapers and produce some response. On the other hand, removing the quiet presence of non-acute, endemic hunger does not have high priority in that elitist morality and politics.

The roots of elitism go way back in Indian history. The Hindu view of mankind—stratified and hierarchical—connects with it. The firm grip of the elite can be seen in practically every sphere of social activity in India. Recently, the historian Ranajit Guha has argued in Writings on South Asian History and Society that it is difficult to disentangle the events of the history of South Asia, since even the writing of history in the Indian subcontinent is so "dominated by elitism." As far as politics is concerned, it is remarkable that much of the leadership of all political parties in India—from the extreme right to the extreme left—comes from this elite background. It is not so much that the leaders join the elite when they establish themselves but that they typically come from that stratum already.

Some of the achievements of India that I discussed earlier reflect the success of elitism. The remarkable expansion of higher education is a case in point. This applies to liberal university education, and also to science and technology. The other side of the coin can be seen in the shocking neglect of elementary education. After thirty-five years of independence, only a miserable 36 per cent of adult Indians are literate. In this nation with a nuclear capacity, well-developed scientific knowhow, and a higher-education ratio perhaps eight times that of China, nearly two-thirds of the citizens simply cannot read or write.

Speculation on the influence of cultural history is usually rather treacherous, but there might well be some significance in the fact that in countries moulded by the less elitist Buddhist tradition, primary education is much more widespread and higher education much less so than in the land of Hinduism. This applies even to Buddhist countries in the same region, such as Burma and Sri Lanka; their adult literacy rates are 70 per cent and 85 per cent respectively (against India's 36 per cent) and their higher-education enrolment as a proportion of the population aged twenty to twenty-four is four per cent and one per cent respectively (as opposed to India's eight per cent).

Underdevelopment of elementary education seems to go hand in hand with limitation of other social services. Kerala, the one state in India that has had a high level of literacy and schooling for a long time, also has a much better developed system of social services, including medical care. The expectation of life at birth in Kerala is, in fact, much closer to that of Sri Lanka than to that of the rest of India. But Kerala occupies an unusual position in Indian history. It has had rather different

property laws and tenurial arrangements. Women have had a larger role in property inheritance. It has also been more open to outside influence. Christians came there by the fourth century and Jews shortly after the fall of Jerusalem, and both got on well with the Hindu kings and with the population; there were long-standing and close trading ties with many foreign countries including the Arab world; and Kerala also elected the first communist government in India in the 1957 state elections. The dividing line between the elite and the non-elite has been under pressure for a long time in Kerala.

I mentioned earlier positive discrimination in favour of "untouchable" groups. Reserving civil service jobs and legislative positions has certainly had the effect of increasing substantially the number of "untouchables" in positions of power and influence. But there is little evidence that this has contributed substantially to improving the lot of the great majority of "untouch ables" in the country. The high correlation of un touchablity with economic disadvantage—in particular landlessness and poverty—makes it difficult to transform the general position of "untouchables" without very substantial economic change. Moreover, social conventions have been hard to break by purely legal means, such as the laws against the practice of untouchability.

In fact, in recent years the persecution of "untouchable" groups by members of some of the rural upper and middle castes seems to have intensified; and in some regions this oppression has even taken a sharply violent form. Members of "untouchable" communities seeking a better economic or social deal (e.g., less exploitative labour relations) have been subjected to harassment, beating, burning of homes, and even murder. While the offenders have been brought to justice in many cases (often only after newspaper reports and the resulting public outrage), the preventive measures have been quite inadequate, and incidents of such violence continue to occur in different parts of rural India. Because of the rural power structure—even the nature of the police force---it is difficult to wipe out this violence without a much firmer and broader use of central power.

It is also remarkable that those "untouchables" who are now in a position of influence thanks to positive discrimination have—with a few exceptions—done very little to help others left behind Recently, the Dalit Sangharsh Samiti has strongly criticised the inaction of "Dalit legislators. Members of Parliament, and ministers in the face of growing atrocities" against other Dalits. Positive discrimination has often done no more than recruit some of the ablest, or most advanced, "untouchable" members into the charmed circle of the Indian elite. One thinks of Marx's remark: "The more a ruling class is able to assimilate the foremost minds of a ruled class, the more stable and dangerous becomes its rule."

The elitist character of Indian society is brought out also by the treatment of women. Many women hold prominent positions in India—as parliamentarians, political leaders, academics, doctors, artists, and others—not to mention the most powerful Prime Minister the country has had. Although women in elite groups may still suffer from disadvantages, many doors are open to them. But the general position of women in Indiansociety is nothing short of scandalous. Their mortality rates are typically higher than men's (except for those above thirty-five). The expectation of life at birth is

The elections, the newspapers, and the political liberties work powerfully against dramatic deprivations and new sufferings, but easily allow the quiet continuation of an astonishing set of persistent injustices.

The strengths and weaknesses of the Indian system are clear enough. It permits endemic malnutrition and hunger that is not acute, so long as these happen quietly; it does not permit a famine both because it would be too acute and because it cannot happen quietly.

lower for the Indian female than for the Indian male, and this pattern is quite contrary to that of the over-whelming majority of countries. Malnutrition too is more common among females. In studying the effects of the 1978 floods in West Bengal, it was found that even among children under five, severe malnutrition was about 60 per cent more frequent for girls than for boys.

All this helps to explain the extraordinary fact that the so-called sex ratio-the percentage of females to males-in India has declined from around 97.2 per cent in 1901 to 93.5 per cent in the last census in 1981. This is, of course, an ominous and startling trend, since with modernisation one would have expected a relative reduction of female mortality vis-a-vis male mortality. On the contrary, it appears that with the progress of modern medicine and health services in India, the opportunities have been much more effectively--and unequally-seized by men than by women. The traditional differences have been heightened by new opportunities, and as the absolute positions of both men and women have slowly improved in health and longevity, the relative position of women has fallen behind. This does not of course happen among the elite—not much anyway. The peculiarities and inequities of the respective mortality rates of men and women among the non-elite majority in India have not become a major policy issue in elitist India.

Insofar as elitism is seen as one of the main problems with India, a comparison with China is obviously relevant. With the establishment of communist China, anti-elitism immediately became one of the major emphases of its official policy, and during the Cultural Revolution this aspect of Chinese policy became particularly prominent. Certainly, anti-elitist achievements of China are very substantial. The traditional rural power structure was smashed effectively, the hold of the urban elite quite transformed. Schooling and medical services have expanded rapidly and are much more widely spread than in India. The general level of nutrition has vastly improved. Life expectancy—between sixty-tour and sixty-nine years according to various recent estimates—is much higher than India's miserable fifty-two

years.

But anti-elitism has caused grave casualties too. The chaos and destruction in the old university system that took place during the Cultural Revolution have clearly extracted a heavy price, and while the system is currently being rebuilt, a great deal remains to be done. The tyranny imposed during the Cultural Revolution was also justified by the anti-elitist policy, and even the more moderate accounts suggest a merciless extrem-ism-torture, "punishments," killing--in the treatment of a considerable part of the population. India's record in this respect is obviously less disquieting. As Fox Butterfield, who was the New York Times correspondent in China, puts it in his disturbing book China: Alive in the Bitter Sea, except for the short period of the "emergency," which ended in Mrs Gandhi's electoral defeat, India "has maintained its political freedom; there have been no unchecked Public Security Ministry, no street committees, no network of forced-labour camps, no persecution of whole groups of people because they were intellectuals or had relatives who had once been landlords, no destruction of libraries and universities "



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Quality products from Menezes-Shulton Mfd By Colfax Laboratories (I) Pvt. Ltd. But in view of the price that India has to pay for its political system, it could be asked: are these liberties worth it? Would not better feeding, clothing and health for the Indian population compensate for the loss of liberty which after all effectively concerns only a minority? I believe this way of posing the choice is both banal and wrong. First, there is little evidence that matters of liberty do not concern most of the people, even in poor countries. Indeed, the response of Indian voters to Mrs Gandhi's "emergency" rule demonstrated the wider concerns of one of the poorest electorates in the world. It is indeed remarkable that a community of voters who are ready to tolerate so much economic mequity and are so difficult to mobilise against elitist policies could be so quick to move in its rejection of tyranny.

Second, the choice posed is unreal. A regime in which basic liberties are severely suppressed, and in which the government cannot be voted out of office no matter what it does, is deeply unpredictable, and there is no guarantee that even largescale starvation and famines would not occur under such a regime. Indeed, there is clear evidence now that in China during the three years from 1959 to 1961 a great many people died from lack of food.

The exact size of the extra mortality caused by the food problem remains controversial. One estimate, based on official Chinese data, indicates that the extra mortality during a four year period including the food

crisis years was about 16.5 million.

There are various other estimates. No matter which of the various estimates we pick, there cannot be any serious doubt that there was truly appalling extra mortality during the food crisis years. The same statistical approach—focusing on extra mortality—was used to calculate the size of the Great Bengal Famine of 1943, and the extra mortality during the years from 1943 to 1946 was estimated to be around three million (much in excess of the official figure of 1.5 million). On that basis the Bengal famine of 1943 counts as the largest famine in South Asia in this century. The scale of Chinese mortality seems to have been larger. So the Chinese catas trophe of 1959 to 1961 dwarfs even the preindependence famines in India, and as I have already noted, there have been no major famines in the postindependence period in India. Although the Chinese



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The government (of India) has been able to ignore endemic hunger because that hunger has neither led to a run on the market, and chaos, nor grown into an acute famine...Persistent orderly hunger does not upset the system.

have an economic system that makes guaranteeing food to everyone much easier than in the Indian economy, it is China rather than India that has had sudden largescale deaths from food shortages in recent times. And this has happened despite the fact that in a normal year, the Chinese poor are much better fed than the Indian poor.

What is also remarkable is that the news of hunger and death in China could fail to become more widely known. It is only in the last few years—nearly twenty years after the event-that the extent of the calamity has been acknowledged, and this has happened after a major change in the Chinese leadership. In India even a fraction of that death toll would have immediately caused a storm in the newspapers and a turmoil in the Indian Parliament, and the ruling government would almost certainly have had to resign. Any government keen on staving in power would have had to avoid such starvation deaths from taking place at any cost. Thus the question of food and starvation is not unrelated to the issue of liberties, of newspapers, and, ultimately, of democracy. The Soviet famines in the Thirties point toward the same lesson. So does the Kampuchean famine of more recent years.

What Wei Jingsheng called "the fifth modernisation"—the establishment of democratic rights—in his
famous wall-poster message of December 1978 (after
which he was sent to prison for 15 years) is not only
valuable in itself, as he emphasised, but it also has a
crucial instrumental function in guaranteeing food and
other necessities of life. The Chinese experience brings
out the penalties of doing without "the fifth modernisation". The Indian experience does not contradict the
value of democratic rights—it confirms that value—but
it also shows how easily terrible inequities can survive
despite "the fifth modernisation." The issue of democratic rights is part of a bigger social picture. In itself it does
not make the picture, but if it is excluded, the picture

has a crucial gap in it.

The strengths and weaknesses of the Indian system are clear enough. It permits endemic malnutrition and hunger that is not acute, so long as these happen quietly; it does not permit a famine both because it would be too acute and because it cannot happen quietly. It permits the mjustice of keeping a large majority of the people illiterate while the elite enjoys the benefits of a vast system of higher education. It tolerates the continuing disadvantages of those who formerly suffered from explicit discrimination, even though such discrimination is now made illegal, and even though "positive discrimination" promotes a small number from the bottom stratum to positions of power and influence as new recruits to the elite. The elections, the newspapers, and the political liberties work powerfully against dramatic deprivations and new sufferings, but easily allow the quiet continuation of an astonishing set of persistent

This dichotomy seems to me to be the central point in judging how India is doing. It is doing quite well in many specific respects—e.g., in terms of growth of income per person. In guaranteeing many traditional liberties, in developing science and technology and higher education, in putting more dynamism into agriculture, in meeting the oil crises and the world recession. But this record has to be assessed in the light of the persistent inequities, and the basic weakness of modern India that sustains them. It is a weakness that is not being

conquered.

A giant scientific leap for India

ANITA PRATAP reports from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh on the successful launching of SLV-3 that put the third Rohini satellite into orbit.

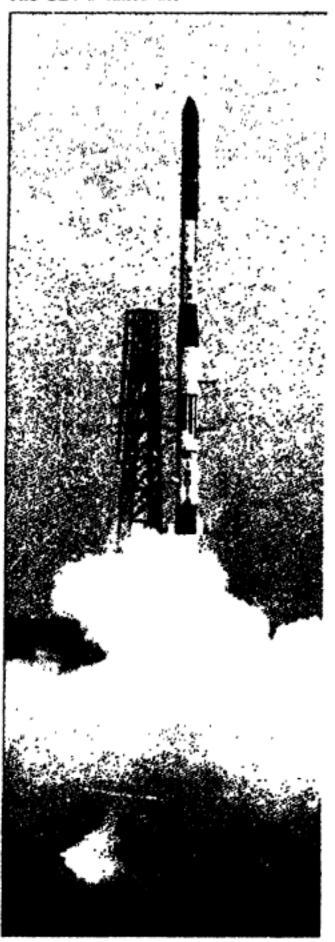
et may have been a small step for mankind but it was a giant leap for India The successful, nearperfect take-off of the indigenously developed red and white satellite launch vehicle (SLV-3-D2) rocket that put the third Rohini satellite into orbit on 17 April, has enabled India to achieve a firmer foothold in the global club that comprises six select nations at the moment. India, it may be recalled, gained a formal entry into this exclusive club (which has the United States of America, the Soviet Union, France, Britain, Japan and China as its other members), on 18 July 1980 with the successful launching of the second experimental SLV-3. On that day India had proved her satellite launch capability. On 17 April 1983, she reaffirmed her technological

The SLV-3-D2 is a four-stage sold propellant rocket, 23 metres long and weighing 16.9 tonnes. Designed at the Space Application Centre, Ahmedabad, of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the rocket was evolved at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Trivandrum. The first successful experimental launching of the indigenously developed SLV-3 took place on 18 July 1980, when a 35-kg Rohmi satellite was put into low earth orbit. This was the culmination of about seven years of developmental work. The satellite was essentially used for monitoring the performance of the fourth stage parameters of the rocket itself. The first developmental flight of the SLV-3 took place on 30 May 1981. The launch itself was a success but the second Rohini (RS-1) that it ejected into space, lasted for only nine days instead of the projected lifespan of 300 days, due to a lower injection altitude.

The SLV-3-D2 launched on 17 April from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh was the second developmental flight and the last of the SLV series. This SLV-3 model has a modifted fourth stage motor, described by ISRO scientists as "one of the most sophisticated in the world." It is capable of injecting the satellite into a higher orbit, thereby precluding the possibility of a shortening of lifespan, as happened in the case of the second Rohini. The third Rohini

satellite that was launched into space on 17 April (RS-D2) weighing 41.5 kg carries an improved version of landmark tracker (that the second Rohini carried) as payload named 'Smart Sensor' The sensor is a twoband solidstate camera capable of classifying ground features like wa-

The SLV-3 takes off



ter, vegetation, bare land, cloud or snow through an onboard processing of data. The satellite also incorporates an additional yo-yo mechanism to de-spin the satellite to lower spin rates that are needed for payload

operation.

The venue of the 17 April launch was Sriharikota, a picturesque spindle-shaped island, that basks between the Bay of Bengal and the Pulicat Lake. In 1969, when the ISRO decided to develop the SLVs for launching satellite into low earth orbits, an extensive aerial survey was conducted to locate a suitable launch site on the east coast. It was important to locate a spot on the east coast because the launch vehicle could then take advantage of the earth's east-to-west rotation. Sriharikota was found to be ideal because it satisfied all the necessary conditions. Moreover, the area was relatively uninhabited, thus providing a safety zone around the launch site. Apart from satellite launch facilities, the Shar centre (Sriharikota), also has facilities for launching large multi-stage sounding rockets. These rockets are launched as part of developmental activities or for scientific investigations of upper atmosphere. So far, more than 300 rockets have been launched from the Shar range. Sounding rockets are also being launched regularly from the other two ranges of ISRO. Till date, 1,500 rockets have been blasted off from the Thumba Equatorial Launching Station (TERSLS) near Trivandrum and about 300 from the Balasore station located on the east coast. It may be pointed out that TERSLS range is India's international launching facility dedicated to the UnitedNations. Its location, very close to the geomagnetic equator, renders it ideal for conducting scientific studies in aeronomy, meteorology and x-ray astronomy.

On 11 April 1983, SLV was mated to the launcher. The final countdown began 24 hours prior to the take-off time fixed at 11 am. There was a nasty moment when the 20 months' efforts of the scientists appeared to be on the brink of being aborted. With barely seconds left for the blast-off, there was a directive to 'hold' operations from the mission director, Mr Ved Prakash Sandlas, as

a fault was located in one of the computers. But the problems were quickly resolved and the countdown resumed, culminating in a perfect take-off at 11.05 am. Two minutes and 20 seconds later, Rohini was hurled into orbit. Mission successful. Nervous anxiety in the block house where the ISRO scientists and technicians were manning operations with bated breaths, soon gave way to scenes of jubilation. Everybody shook hands, congratulated each other and thumped each other on the backs. Even the most cynical of pressmen, inured by many a triumph could not suppress smiles of joy. They too burst into applause. It was a moment of triumph for India.

In May 1981, after the successful launching of the SLV that had put the second Rohini into orbit, Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi had declared, "...Certain unwarranted inferences have been drawn by some commentators about its military potential. I should like to re-afffirm that Indian science is dedicated to peace, its motive is development. All the major achievements of Indian science so far have occurred in its search for peaceful uses and not as a spin-off of defence requirements. This is true of Pokharan and of Sriharikota."

rs Gandhi who addressed the Mmedia at Sriharikota after the successful launch of 17 April, reiterated India's commitment to apply space technology for developmental purposes. She harped on the beneficial guidance to farmers and peasants by satellites relaying advance data on the impending monsoon patterns. Mrs Gandhi who was witnessing the launch from the site for the first time, remarked, "I am thril-led, excited and proud." The Prime Minister who has consistently evinced a special preference for science and technology, said, "Though I am well over 60, the sight was a special thrill for I realised that I had not lost the sense of wonder and marvel at what can be achieved by mankind." The PM, who is normally curt and cold with the press, was relaxed, friendly and cheerful, elated as she was by the success of the mission. Dressed in a crumpled cotton sari, Mrs Gandhi adeptly deflected barbed questions about the military significance of the SLV-3. However, unlike in 1981, she did not categorically scorch the insinuation of the military potential of the achievement. Smilingly, she indulged in a bit of sabre-rattling. The question is really irrelevant, because it is stating the obvious. India does feel the need to flex its technological muscles in the wake of the Islamic bomb. The fact is that the successful SLV-3 launch of 17 April, puts the military option within India's capability, should the need arise of making an intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM). The SLV-3 can be converted into an IRBM by replacing



Data Processing Centre, SHAR

the fourth stage that carries the Rohini with warheads.

A dapper Professor Satish Dhawan, chairman ISRO, dressed in blue, jauntily parried questions with the press. When asked what would be the life span of Rohini, he retorted with mock insouciance, "Oh, about a 1,000 years." Mr Ved Prakash Sandlas, the mission director, told the insistent pressmen with typical caution, "It can be assumed that the satellite will last for three years." Prof. Dhawan informed that Rohini had entered in a nominal orbit elliptical of 438 km (at perigee when it is closest to earth) and 975 km (at apogee when it is furthest away from earth). He said that confirmation had come from the VSSC that Rohini had entered a 99-minute orbit of the earth. The ground stations of ISRO were keeping a track of the Rohini and it was reported that the satellite was sending "strong and healthy signals." A Shar spokesman said the next day that the 400-800 km orbit of Rohini was "close to predictions." The fact remains that Rohini was orbiting closer to earth than expected which was also why it was taking three minutes less for each orbit (having completed 14 orbits in 24 hours, Rohini was averaging 96 minutes per orbit). While this does not prophecy doom, as the orbit is sufficiently far from earth, (and therefore from the gravitational pull), it may be pointed out that orbital decay sets in laster when satellites are positioned closer to earth. This is what happened in the case of the second Rohini that lasted only nine days.

Like a proud mother showing off her bright little children to the guests, Mrs Gandhi insisted that the scientists responsible for the successful mission, be introduced to the media people present. Pens scratched, tape-recorders whirred and bulbs flashed as beaming team leaders were introduced to the nation. They included: Dr Vasant Gowarikar, director of VSCC, Mr Ved Prakash Sandlas, the mission director, Col N. Pant, ISRO's expert on satellite com-

munications, Dr Tarsem Singh, project director for the satellite, Mr M.K. Sanyal, vehicle director, and ISRO scientists, Mr A.C. Bhel, Ranaraj Jayamani and Dr Gupta.

With the technological feat of 17 April, Indian space efforts have indeed come a long way from the time a small rocket was launched from a church building in Thumba, 7 years ago. Success and failure have always gone hand in hand as far the nation's space programmes are concerned. In 1975, India's first satellite, Aryabhatta, had to be abandoned five days after it was ejected into space. Bhaskara-1 which, like Aryabhatta, was launched from a Soviet cosmodrome in an intercosmos vehicle on 7 June 1979, had problems with a stuck camera, which however was reactivated almost a year later. Bhaskara-2, launched again from the Soviet cosmodrome, had problems with its remote sensing TV cameras. The Apple satellite launched by the Ariane rocket from Kourou Island in French Guyana on 18 June 1981, served a very limited purpose due to non-development of one of its two solar panels. The first SLV-3 mission on 10 August 1979 from Sriharikota was a failure as the fourth-stage motor carrying the technical payload plummeted into the Bay of Bengal. The first developmental flight was a success but the satellite was shortlived. Insat had to be abandoned 150 days after the launch because of a series of malfunctions. But ISRO has had its share of success too in Bhaskara-2: the satellite instructional television experiment (which according to communication experts highlighted the victory of hardware and the defeat of software), and the satellite telecommunications experiment project (STEP). ISRO spokesmen point out that space programmes do have an impact on the country's industrial and technological infrastructure. Already, in areas of electronics materials, chemicals, precision fabrication and reliability engineering. Indian industry has benefited from spin offs of the country's space efforts, through transfers of knowhow and technology. Moreover, as a matter of policy, fabrication of the required hardware, under various projects and programmes is to be carried out as far as possible by sub-contracting it to the Indian industry. Spurred by the success of SLV-3-D2, Mrs Gandhi has indicated that a higher investment would be earmarked for space research programmes in the next ten years. This implies an acceleration of the next project that the ISRO is working on-the augmented satellite launch vehicle (ASLV) capable of launching satellites with a payload of 150 kg. This is scheduled for 1984-85. This will be followed by the polar SLV capable of launching satellites with payloads of 600-700 kg, currently scheduled for 1987-88.

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Reporter as petitioner

haitanya Kalbag, who won the Rs 20,000 PUCL-India Today award for 1982, actually stumbled on the story by accident. He had covered the notorious Deoli massacre for his magazine, India Today, in November 1981; in Mainpuri district of UP, 12 harijans had been killed and a dacoit gang blamed for the atrocity. At the end of December, the same year, he happened to be in Agra when news broke out of another massacre of nine or ten harijans, this time at Sadhupur, near Ferozabad.

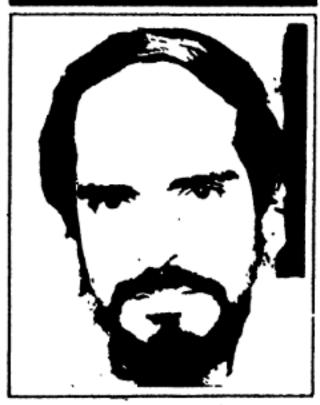
By the time Kalbag rushed there, the bodies were already in shrouds. Only the previous month, the then chief minister, V. P. Singh, had held a big public meeting in which he had promised to eliminate dacoity within the state in 30 days or tender his resignation. Kalbag was perplexed by the long list of so-called dacoits killed by the police in "encounters." Between 19 November and 28 December, 299 people had been shot dead. "I sat down with a map of UP and tried to establish some pattern in these killings," recalls the 26-year-old correspondent. "They had occurred in as many as 40 districts out of a total of 57 in the state. And yet, only 12 were officially stated to be affected by the menace earlier."

Early next year, he travelled extensively to the interior from Lucknow, Kanpur and Etawah. "I tried to establish as many facts as I could of five encounters from photographs of the dead men, documents, affidavits of relatives. I was helped by a Lok Dal worker, Mulaiyam Singh Yadav, who took me to the villages. People were terrified: young men were running away in order to escape death at the hands of the police." (The theory in Lucknow afterwards was that his exposes of the connivance between the state government and the police were part of Lok Dal conspiracy to discredit V. P. Singh.)

When Kalbag's story, titled "Peace of the Graveyard," appeared in India Today on 31 January 1982, the UP Assembly passed a breach of privilege motion against him because he had named MLAs who had connections with dacoits. The speaker gave him a week to reply but he took legal advice and ignored it. Nothing happened.

The idea of filing a writ in the Supreme Court about the UP encounters was the correspondent's own. His magazine promptly agreed to finance his case—a rare instance of a newspaper proprietor actually

MEDIA



DARRYL D'MONTE

taking the initiative in a public interest litigation instead of being drawn reluctantly to court only to defend a paper against defamation or other charges, however flimsy and frivolous. Notice was issued to the UP government, the inspectorgeneral of police, etc. to explain how innocent villagers—Kalbag hastens to admit that they might have been petty criminals at most could be shot in cold blood. The effect was almost immediate: the number of encounters dropped dramatically. What is more, cases of encounters involving Naxalites in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, being investigated by V. M. Tarkunde, were tagged on to the same petition.

Similar allegations about fake deaths of peasant activists suspected of having Naxal sympathies have been made in the media by various fact-finding missions even well before the Emergency. If none had quite the same impact as Kalbag's story, it shows that journalists

Allegations about fake deaths of peasant activists suspected of having Naxal sympathies have been made in the media....If none had quite the same impact as Chaitanya Kalbag's story, it shows that journalists are being taken more seriously...

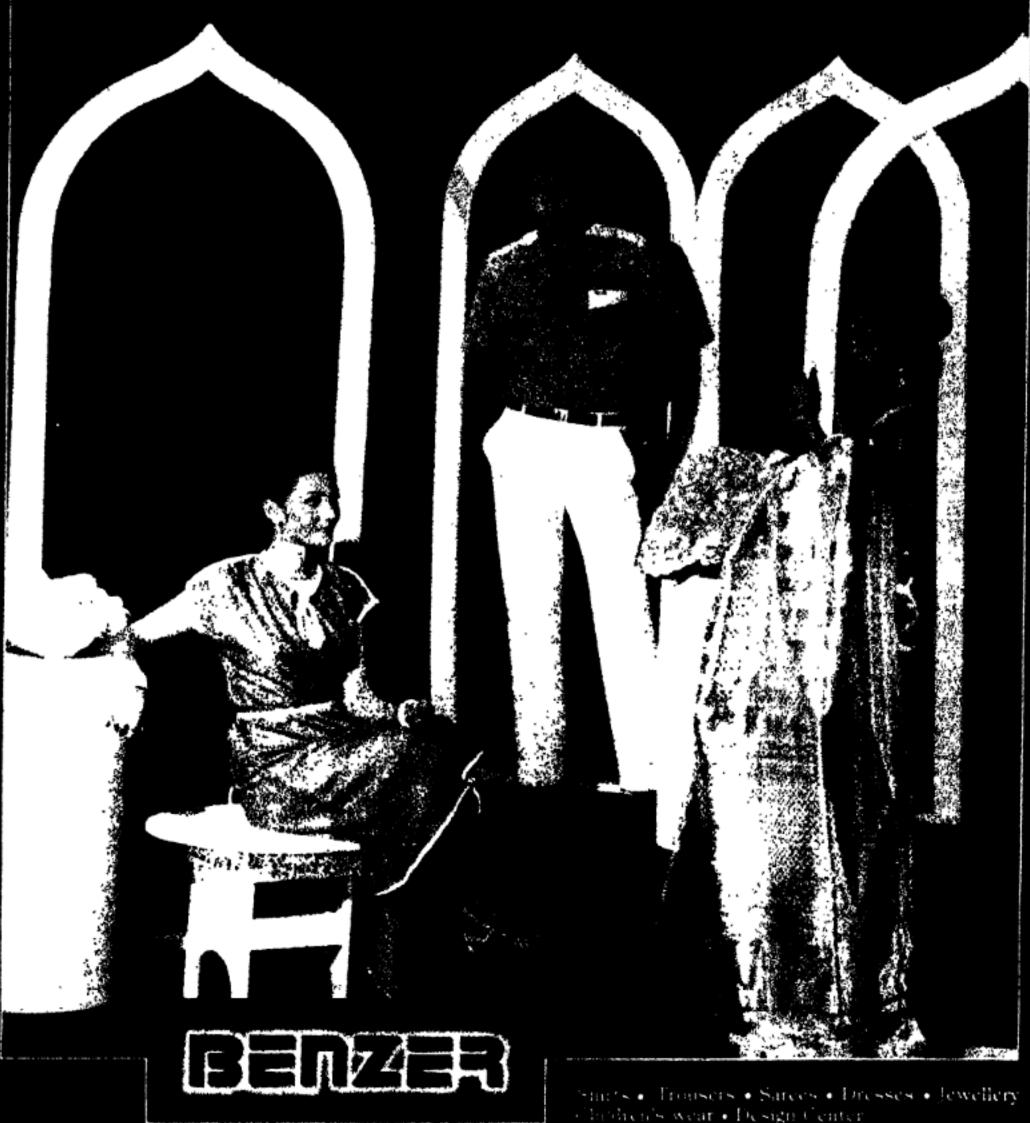
are being taken more seriously—by themselves, to begin with, but also by the judiciary and civil rights organisations. The very institution of the PUCL-India Today award, which was won by Swamı Trivedi for his expose of torture of prisoners in MP last year, speaks for itself.

A magazine like India Today should be given some of the credit for helping to make the task of investigation that much easier. "We're allowed to go anywhere, spend any amount of money, on a story," says Kalbag. "There's the feeling in the magazine that once you have the facts right, you can put anything into print." India Today goes to considerable lengths to check on its facts and even makes its correspondents write detailed explanations to the editor, Aroon Purie, if readers point out any factual mistakes in a story.

"Some of the dailies are beginning to realise that money is important for a correspondent," Kalbag adds. "If you can hire a car, you can cover hundreds of kilometres to get a story. A lot of good journalists attached to newspapers are simply not being given the facilities to work, even in a state like Assam. That is why some of them are just sitting it out in Gauhati-though that may partly be out of their own lethargy-dishing out their copy." His "human factor" story on Assam won a great deal of acclaim—till today, there's not been a single denial from the army.

Kalbag is one of today's breed of young journalists whose commitment to the profession is total. He feels that the older generation is being threatened by men and women still in their Twenties who have been able to carve a niche for themselves in magazines-opportunities that would never come their way if they tried to work for a daily newspaper. He began his career when he was only 17 and still in college in Bombay. From 1976 to 1978, he edited Transindia, a magazine for Indians abroad, which the owner Nari Hira closed down. For the next three years he worked for New Delhi, till that too folded and then joined India Today. With his exposes, he joins journalists like Sudip Mazumdar of the Indian Express in Delhi who have made the courts sit up and take notice of what has been investigated. Earlier this year, he won the Sanskriti Rs 5,000 award for Delhi-based journalists, also for "Peace of the Graveyard;" incidentally, these are the first two awards that India Today has won.

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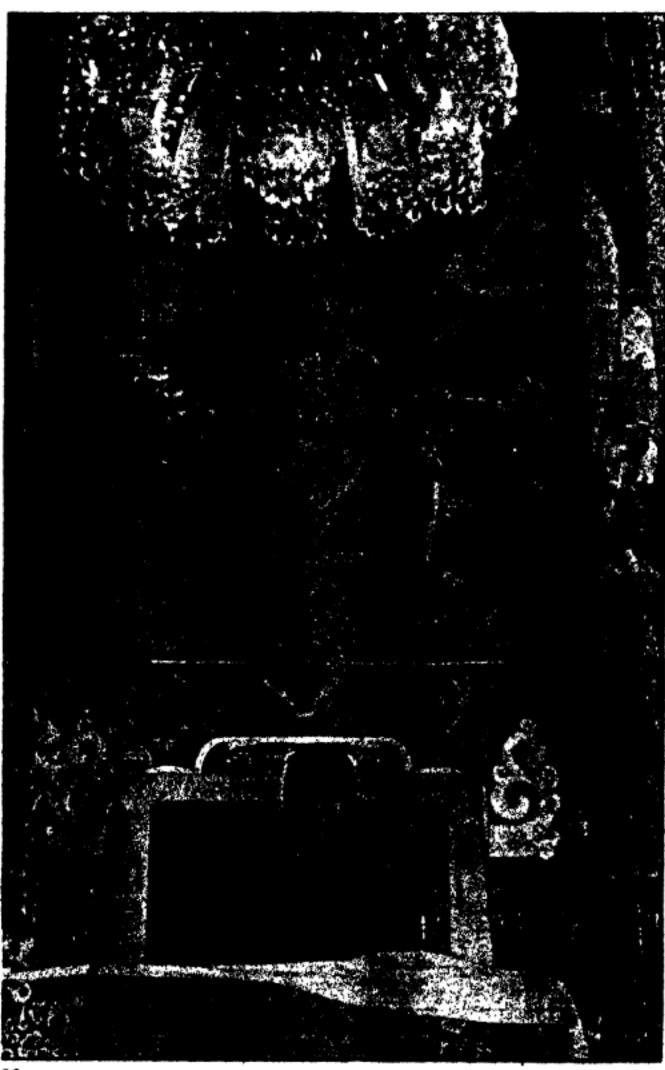
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'The Chinese regard religion as poison'

The Dalai Lama told VIVEK SENGUPTA



On 1 January 1950, the nascent communist regime in China declared that one of the basic tasks of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) would be to "liberate" Tibet and "stand guard at the Chinese frontiers." This signalled the start of the PLA march into Tibet and, despite protests from the Indian and Tibetan governments, the Chinese forces continued, over the years, to extend and consolidate their hold on Tibet.

The legal position on Tibet, as established by the 1959 report of the International Commission of Jurists, was that, regardless of early history, Tibet had been for all practical purposes independent since 1912 and China had no right to conquer it by force. The Chinese, however, were not willing to recognise such "imperialist" legal niceties. Thus while assuring India and the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetans, that Lhasa's autonomy would not be diluted, the Chinese tried hard to swiftly ring out the old and bulldoze in the new.

As a natural reaction, unrest mounted among the Tibetans. The Golaks and the Khampas (in the eastern and the north-eastern borderlands) revolted. In 1958, the revolt spread to Lhasa. Refugees began to cross over into India. There was a worse conflagration in the early months of 1959 to which the Chinese retaliated in strength. On 31 March 1959, the Dalai Lama and his entourage fled to India and were granted political asylum. China launched a propaganda barrage accusing India of engineering the Tibetan revolt. That was what Nehru received for espousing China's cause in world forums, in general and, in particular, following a policy of appeasement on the question of Tibet. Even though Nehru told the Indian Parliament on 27 April 1959, that he was "greatly distressed," and described the Chinese accusations as "unbecoming," "fantastic" and "entirely devoid of substance," he continued to placate Beijing on the question of Tibet. But he did not deny hospitality to the Tibetan leaders and his followers. The Dalai Lama was allowed to set up a government-in-exile at Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, Tibetan refugees were given all assistance, but the emigre government was not recognised. Not that this approach cut any ice with the Chinese—the aggression of 1962 amply proved otherwisebut that has remained India's line vis-a-vis the Dalai Lama, his people **and** his country.

The institution of the Dalai Lama dates back to the fourteenth century. Sonam Gyatso, the third incarnation of the monk Geduntruppa, visited Mongolia and converted Prince Altan Khan. The latter gave Gyatso the title Dalai (ocean of learning)

The Dalai Lama at Dirang: 'Tibetans can become free through non-violence'

Lama. Gyatso applied the title retrospectively to his two predecessors and was thus called the third Dalai Lama of the Gelupa sect. It was the fifth Dalai Lama who united Tibet and assumed political power in addition to his religious authority. The present Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso (47) is 14th in the line of succession (a Dalai Lama is located by following infallible signs left by the previous incarnation).

Here in India, he has broken the physical isolation from his people and has travelled extensively in India and abroad to be with the more than one lakh refugees. Politically, till recently he had not acted beyond issuing an annual statement on 10 March, the anniversary of the infructulous Tibetan uprising Friends of Tibet (or enemies of China) had periodically got world forums like the UN General Assembly (1959, 1961 and 1965) to condemn the Chinese. The Chinese, in their turn, had branded the Dalai Lama as a "gang leader of fugitive reactionary bandits" and a "running dog of capitalist forces."

But things changed significantly with the rise of Deng Xiaoping in China. He injected a heavy dose of pragmatism into Chinese policies at

home and abroad.

Meanwhile, even as India has been pursuing efforts to normalise relations with China, it took a positive step in its ambivalent and diffident approach to the Sino-Tibetan question by permitting the Dalai Lama to reenter Arunachal Pradesh for the first time in 24 years. China, it may be recalled, does not recognise the McMahon Line and claims Arunachal as its own. The Dalai Lama, on his part, had good reasons to visit Arunachal. It was into the then **NEFA** that he had escaped with his followers in 1959. There are around 6,450 Tibetan refugees in settlement camps in the union territory and the Monpa tribals in the two Kameng districts (East and West) are predominantly Lamaist Buddhists. The sixth Dalai Lama was from Kameng; Tawang in West Kameng has the second largest monastery in Asia (after the Potala), and since 1977, the people of Dirang, in the Dijen Ri river) valley, have been inviting him to come and perform the rare and complex Kalachakta Tantrik puja in their town (pop. 5,000; ht: **5,5**00).

And so he came to Arunachal Pradesh on 24 March 1983 as a guest of the government. After touring settlements in Teju, Meao and Tenzingang and the monastery in Tawang, he arrived in Dirang on 17 April. He inaugurated a beautiful gumpa (Buddhist temple) built in record time by CPWD engineers at a cost of Rs 3.5 lakhs. From 17 to 27 April, he performed the Kalachakra Tantrik puja. In between he found time to talk to SUNDAY.



Dalai Lamar a welcome to the monastery in Dirang

Your Holiness, when you came from Lhasa into India in 1959, you had passed through these areas. Do you remember anything of that time?

A: I was, of course, very tired. I don't really remember everything. I was travelling on ponyback. On entering India, one felt more safe. So mentally one was relieved and relaxed (laughs). Upto the border (he entered the then Kameng Frontier Division at the Khinzemane checkpost on the McMahon Line) there was quite a lot of anxiety. Yes, there were Indian officials (at least one officer of the SIB met him at the checkpost) to receive me at the border. There must have been two or three hundred Tibetans with me.

Q: Have the Chinese relaxed their

curbs on religion in Tibet?

A: In and around the Lhasa area as well as in certain other important areas they are allowing monasteries to function. In the rest of Tibet, monasteries and temples have been completely destroyed. The Chinese regard any religion, particularly Buddhism, as poison. I met Chairman Mao Zedong several times. During an early meeting he had praised Lord Buddha and also Goddess Tara. Then during my last meeting with him he told me that religion was poison(laughs)! They(the Chinese communists) are completely ignorant. They do not know what is the real value of religion, dharma, especially Buddhism.

In Mongolia as well as in the Soviet Union, I explained to them that actually Buddhist ideas do not

oppose socialist ideas.

Q: When I had met you in Dharamsala some years back, you had said that Buddhism was akin to Marxism

in many ways.

A: Yes, that's right. From the theoretical point of view we are atheists like they are. It's all internal. Our own Karma creates our own mind. So everything depends on ourselves.

Q: You have sent the delegations to Tibet in recent years and a fourth has been awaiting clearance to proceed. What is the state of the "delegation diplomacy" vis-a-vis the Chinese?

A: It remains the same. The three delegations have more or less completed the fact-finding task.

Q: What did they find? Have condi-

tions improved?

A: Oh, no, although since 1979-80, there has been some improvement regarding conditions about food. which are comparatively much better now than before. The Chinese seem to be paying a little more attention to Tibetans. These things are certainly good but basically the situation remains the same. They (the Chinese) follow a double-faced policy regarding religion. They talk of complete freedom, but at the same time they place every restriction. They have some showpiece monasteries, as I said a little while ago, where certain old monks are allowed to remain. But according to recent information, they pray only once a week and for the rest of the time they are forced to work in orchards.

Q: But you have spoken before about the need for changes in monas-

teries.

A: Yes, some kinds of reforms are highly necessary. For instance, at the Tawang monastery (in Arunachal) I told them that the traditions which they follow are out of date. As there is social progress, the activities of the monasteries must adjust to them. It is not sufficient for (the Lamas) to just engage in daily prayer. They must be useful to the community. That is important.

Q: It is quite evident that Tibetans in Tibet still regard you **as** their leader? How can they win their

freedom?

A: Through non-violence.

Q: Will non-violence work on the Hans?

A: (laughs aloud) I believe in nonviolence. In the long run, it works. In Tibet, violent rebellions did take place twice, in 1959 and then again in 1968-69. There was very little information outside about the second one. Only now we found out about it. There were disturbances in central Tibet between Shigatse and Lhasa, also in some Kham and Amdo areas. As a result many Tibetans were executed.

Q: You have said time and again that you will return to Lhasa if the Tibetans are genuinely happy. How

will you find that out?

A: The final solution is the exercise of the right of selfdetermination. I know that it is difficult to implement(laughs).

Q: Will there be a fifteenth Dalai

Lama?

. A: I don't know (laughs). It depends on necessity. If the people want and desire, another Dalai Lama will come after me. My own endless rebirths, as a Buddhist, will continue. Personally I have the wish or desire to reappear in any place where there is some usefulness (for

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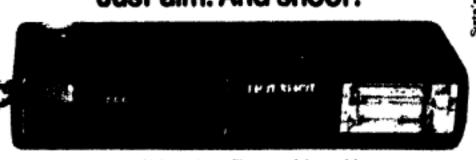
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SUNDAY SPECIAL

GANDHI INHEAVEN

By I. S. Johan

Location: Somewhere in heaven. Characters: Mahatma Gandhi, Kasturba, Jinnah, Nehru, Sardar Patel. Subhas Bose, Rajagopalachari. Mirabehn, Maulana Azad, Dr Ambedkar and Lord Mountbatten. Scene: Except Jinnah and Mountbatten all are squatting under a banyan tree, in a semi-circle with Mahatma Gandhi in the centre. Jinnah is on a chair on the left with his back towards all. Mountbatten in the opposite corner alternates between squatting on the ground uncomfortably and sitting self-consciously on the chair.

Time: Shortly after the special showing of Attenborough's Gandhi arranged by Lord Mountbatten. The

atmosphere is funereal.

(Mirabehn enters with charkha which she places before Gandhi and sits behind him next to Kasturba who eves her suspiciously).

Gandhi: (pushing away the charkha) No more spinning for me, ever. (Everyone is shocked. Even Jinnah turns to Gandhi.)

Jinnah: Gandhi without his gimmicks? Impossible. (He draws at his cigarette)

Gandhi: (ignoring the taunt) Jinnah Sahib, you must stop smoking. Remember, you died of cancer.

Nehru: (irritated) Bapu, is Mr Jinnah's smoking that important at this juncture when we are faced with the biggest holocaust-this Attenborough film? Let us stick to the agenda.

Patel: I had warned Bapu so often not to trust the British. See how they have stabbed us in the back with this

film.

Nehru: (to Mountbatten) Et tu Brute? I thought you were my friend. You encouraged Attenborough to make this disgraceful film. It is even dedicated to you.

Mountbatten: Yes, Jawaharlal, but vour daughter Indira approved of the script and even financed it.

Subhash Bose: She did that be-

Gandhi gathering salt during his Dandi march in a scene from the film





cause I was not in it. It was her vendetta for my opposing her father. Dr Ambedkar: I too have been left

out as if I was an untouchable. Rajaji: Me too, but I think it is a matter for celebration to have been spared such degradation after death.

Azad: I have been made to look like a vernacular petition writer in an honorary magistrate's court.

Jinnah: But to make me look such an arrogant, adamant and mean person! I am sure it is on Mountbatten's instigation, because I refused to have him as the first Governor-General of Pakistan.

Gandhi: I am going to fast to death

to protest against this film.

Rajaji: Don't make that mistake, Gandhiji. Here in heaven there is not death. You will be starving till Doomsday without anyone urging vou to break the fast.

Mountbatten: But what are your objections, Gandhiji? The film has brought phenomenal prestige to India and proclaimed your greatness to

the world.

Gandhi: It has proclaimed Ben Kingsley's greatness, not mine. Now when they think of Gandhi they think of Kingsley. I have become his duplicate. (Jinnah and Bose laugh)

Rajaji: Yes, Attenborough's Gandhi is winning Oscars which were denied to our Gandhiji all his life.

Mirabehn: But you look so handsome in the film, Bapu. Now the world will think of you not only as a handsome mind but also a handsome

Kasturba: That is what I hated most about the film. I wanted to look more at Ben Kingsley than at my 'patidey'!

Gandhi: (bursting out, laughing) It was mental adultery, you must do penance for it 'Ba.' But I will not tell you what I thought of Rohini Hathangady, the young woman with the big beautiful eyes who played your part (everyone laughs except Kasturba).

Mirabehn: (to spite Kasturba) What eyes this Rohini has; lotus-like and what a bewitching smile!

Kasturba: (retaliating) The woman portraying you too was a beauty; what dignity, what poise! (Everyone, smiles)

Gandhi: (laughing) Un Gandhian

debate, ladies. (To Mountbatten)
Louis, who was that exotically
beautiful woman journalist? I never
saw her in my life!

Mountbatten: The one whom you call a seducer before your superb

death scene?

Kasturba: (defensively) Ben Kingslev called her that, patidev would never.

Gandhi: To be truthful, Ba, I also felt like calling her that. (Everyone claps except Kasturba and Patel)

Mountbatten: That was a fictitious character introduced to bring feminine glamour to an otherwise dull subject.

Sardar Patel: It is blasphemy, peo-

ple will not tolerate it.

Mountbatten: Those scenes are getting repeat audiences.

Patel: That may be so in the decadent West but not in India.

Mountbatten: In India many people are going into the theatres only till the duration of these scenes between Gandhi and Candice Bergen.

Gandhi: Actually, I too want to see

them again (laughs).

Nehru: (irritably) I cannot understand, Bapu, how you can laugh after a calamity like this film.

Mountbatten: The British influence, my dear Jawaharlal (laughs).

Nehru: How could Indu permit this chap Roshan Seth to portray me? I, who was considered a handsome statesman by all accounts!

Mountbatten: Yes, even Edwina found you handsome, old chap.

Sardar Patel: But Seth is not so obnoxious as this Saeed Jaffrey who plays me. He looks like a paanwala. Watching him I was petrified lest he utter, "Huzoor, paan pesh karoon?"

Jinnah: Actors portraying you all at least looked like human, but the one playing me. They could have chosen that Gabbar Singh. I would have liked to be seen munching 'apni-pasand' biscuits. At least the children would have loved me.

Nehru: And to portray the Sardar, the Maulana and me as pigmies around Gandhiji is the greatest distortion of history.

Bose: I thought that was the only factual thing about the film. You were all pigmies around a giant. I was the only other giant and hence left out.

Mountbatten: You are all pointing out the theatrical flaws, mostly.

Rajaji: There is an actor in every man. It is but natural that the first reaction to the film should be filmic.

Bose: What other aspect is there to discuss in this film except its theatricality? How can I be left out of a serious account of India? It is I and my INA who brought freedom to India.

Dr. Ambedkar: And how can I be left out with my millions of untouchables? It is I who wrote the Constitution of free India.

Gandhi: But even most of me has



Police firing on demonstrators in Jallianwalla Bagh in a scene from the film

been left out.

Mountbatten: These are the requirements and constraints of a screenplay.

Gandhi: It is a disappointing film in every way. Jawaharlal, you must communicate to Indira to get a sequel made—Gandhi-II. I am told that it is the done thing. This sequel should be multi-dimensional and not single-dimensional as the present one.

Mountbatten: I warn you against that, Gandhiji. That type of film may not be able to keep out many undesirable aspects.

Gandhi: Like?

Mountbatten: Like your alleged experiments with sex-control, like...

Patel: (interrupting) That is enough. There is no danger of these controversies creeping in because Gandhi-II will be directed by an

Nehru: To portray the Sardar, the Maulana and me as pignfies around Gandhiji is the greatest distortion of history.

Subhash Bose: I thought that was the only factual thing about the film. You were all pigmies around a giant. I was the only other giant and hence left out.

Indian and not a foreigner.

Bose: Yes. Satyajit Ray should direct it. He cannot afford not to lionize me, if he wants to live in Bengal.

Dr. Ambedkar: No, it should be directed by V. Shantaram, of course, with the stipulation that he will not cast Sandhya for the role of Kasturba or Mirabehn.

Sardar Patel: Only Vithalbhai Jhaveri who made the Mahatma documentary should direct it. His syrupy Gujarati flavour is a favourite of our audiences.

Gandhi: I want first of all to give the offer to Jinnah Sahib to nominate a Pakistani to direct the film.

Jinnah: I will not even discuss this matter any more, because I have suddenly remembered that Pakistan has banned Indian films. I will have a Pakistani film, Jinnah, made and I will see to it that all of you are villains in it. We have many terrible actors to play your parts. Goodbye. (He starts walking towards the exit, comes back and takes his chair with him)

Gandhi: Since we cannot reach an agreement on the director let everyone direct his own scenes (everyone

ciaps).

Rajaji: Since we are now going to produce pictures instead of politics we better learn the film technique lest we falter.

Azad: That is a practical suggestion, we should acquire the services of some film folks for that.

Rajaji: But where will you find any tilm man in heaven? They are all in the other place.

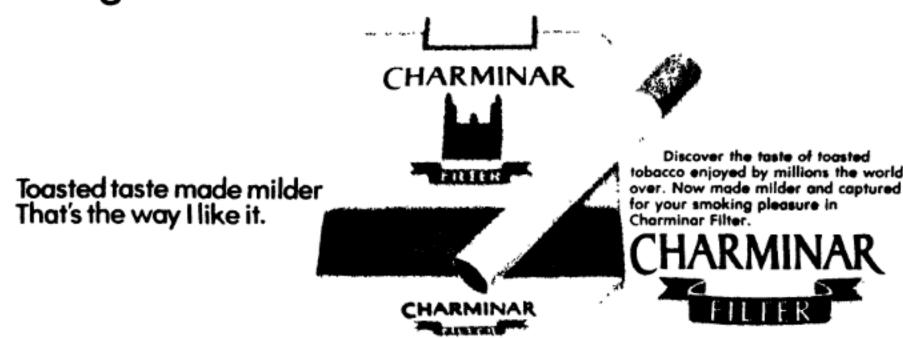
Mirabehn: May I offer some suggestions?

41

Give me a quiet afternoon. Give me a friend. Give me a chessboard.



And give me the taste of toasted tobacco.





A still from Gandhi: Gandhi leads striking miners in South Africa

Gandhi: What would you know about Indian cinema?

Mirabehn: In my last years in Vienna I watched a lot of Indian films on video. These days that is the only way to keep contact with India.

Nehru: Then you be our produc-

tion manager.

Mountbatten: (to himself) They cannot do anything without a Britisher.

Mirabehn: For glamour we should have some beautiful Indian

Nehru: Excellent. I will contact Devika Rani and Mehtab. They are known to me.

Mirabehn: No. Panditji, we must have some young girls like Rekha and Hema Malini.

Azad: Never heard of them.

Mirabehn: They too had never heard of us till Attenborough's Gandhi.

Gandhi: I am most concerned about who will play me.

Mirabehn: Amitabh Bachchan. Gandhi: Is he popular?

Mirabehn: With due respects may I say that he commands more audience in one public appearance than you in all your...

Gandhi: I am most concerned about who will play me. •

Mirabehn: Amitabh Bachchan. •

Gandhi: Is he popular?

Mirabehn: With due respects may I say that he commands more audience in one public appearance than you in all your....

Gandhi: (cutting) Does he look like me too?

Mirabehn: That will be your problem, not his. People accept and adore him in any role. After the film it will be a patriotic passion with people to alter your pictures and statues to look like him.

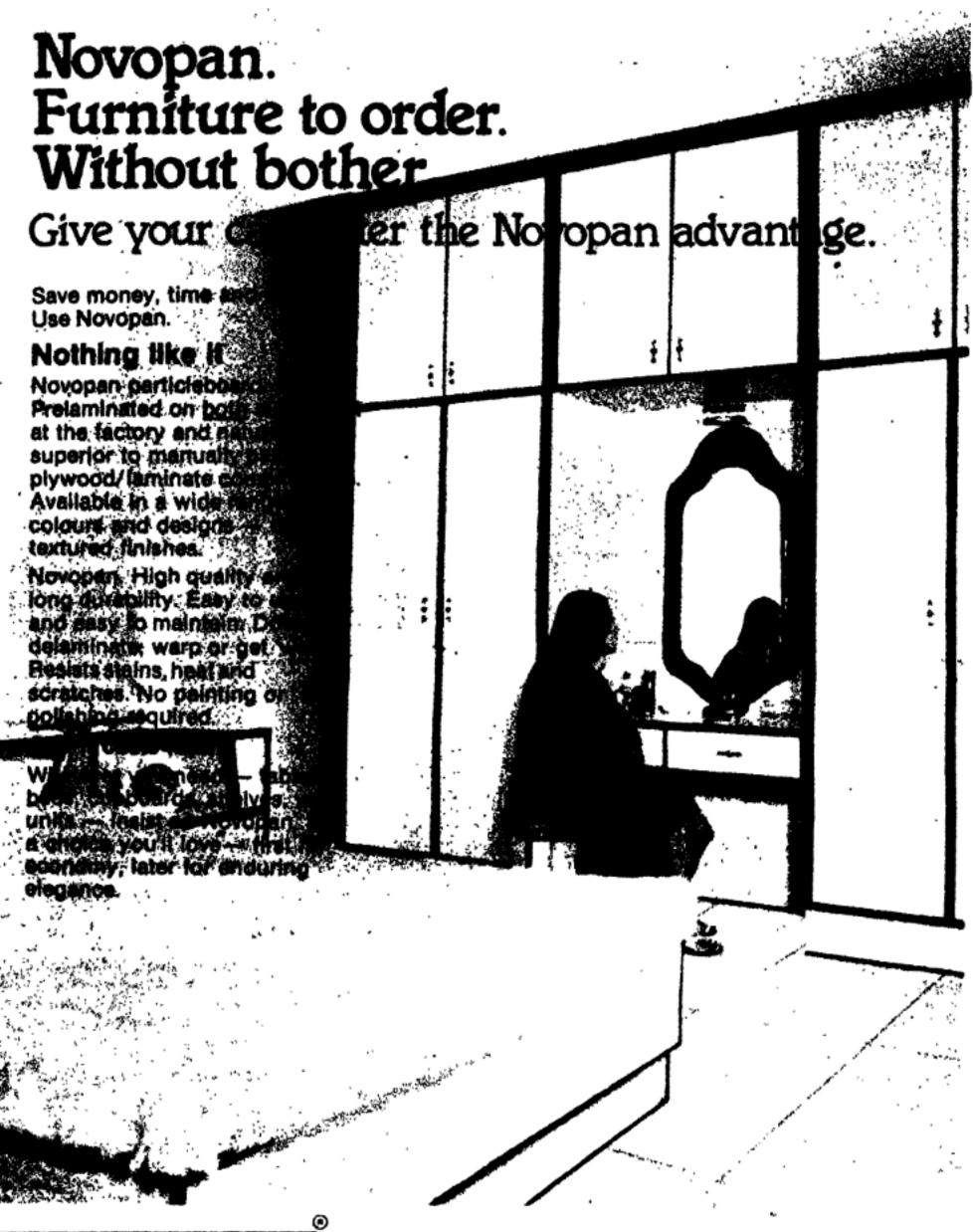
Nehru: What about my role? In fact what about the rest of us? We are not going to allow those thirdrate impersonators to portray us. (All utter 'huns' and 'haans')

Mirabehn: Not to worry. For your parts we will have a chap called I.S. Johar as our casting director. He has perfect duplicates for everyone.

Rajaji: Good. Now that our minds' are at ease about this problem, may I request you, Gandhiji, to enthrall us

once again with your spinning?
Gandhi: (pulling the charkha to spin) This chap, what's his name, ah, ves Ben Kingsley, he brought a certain spiritual style to spinning which I must acquire.

THE END



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Willingdon: Unfulfilled promise

espite the stiff opposition of the diehards in England, the British bureaucrats in India and Calcuttabased British business interests, Lord Irwin persuaded Mahatma Gandhi to attend the second Round Table Conference which he finally did attend as the sole representative of the National Congress. In the meantime there was a change of administration in India. Now Lord Willingdon took the place of Lord Irwin. Willingdon's relations with Gandhiji while he was Governor of Bombay were not bad; but resistance was now building up within his administration which brought about a complete rupture between the two. Willingdon began his innings as Viceroy on a very hopeful note. Much was expected out of the Round, Table parleys. It was thought that the new Constitution for India would closely approximate the ideal of responsible government. The new Viceroy, in his very first speech on the soil of India, made the following pleasant announcement:

"I am quite clear that the work that the Viceroy has to do is much too heavy for a gentleman of my mature years, and I venture to hope that all those concerned, when they get over to London in the near future, will hurry on towards the completion of their labours in regard to the Constitutional Reforms, so that my life may more clearly approximate to the four happy years I spent in Canada as a Constitutional Governor General and in order that I may shortly be relieved of many of my administrative duties. (Speeches of Willington, Vol. I, Speech at Chelmsford Club Dinner, 27 June 1931, p. 20).

The promise, however, turned sour. The attempts at an understanding were dashed to pieces on the rock of reactionary opposition in England,

Gandhiji's dreams are shattered

Mounting discontent with the British raj forced the English to leave India in 1947. But the senseless violence between Hindus and Muslims which followed independence ruined Gandhiji's dreams of a united, free India, concludes MADHU LIMAYE in the last of his five-part series on Gandhiji and the Indian freedom movement

the question of reserve powers and Viceregal veto, the communal tangle, princely autocracy and obstinacy of British business interests. Instead of becoming the first Constitutional Governor General, Willingdon became the author of a most repressive regime. Congressmen were put behind bars, ruthless fines and confiscation were resorted to, and a pall of bitterness fell over the landscape of Indo-British relations. Willingdon in his last address to the Combined Central Legislature (8 April, 1936) lamented the severe criticism of his policy and pleaded that his term and work should not be dismissed by the "catch-word of 'repression'." (Ibid, Vol. II, pp. 222-23).

The Provincial Assemblies now were to be elected under the government of India Act, 1935, with a broadened franchise. The National Congress decided to participate, and Jawaharlal Nehru, elected president for the second time on Gandhiji's advice, transformed the election, through his whirlwind tour, into a great political campaign. The pro-British party consisting of Raibahadurs and Khanbahadurs was trounced everywhere except in the Punjab. Even the restricted electorate could not prevent the return of a hostile verdict against the British raj and its savage repression in the previous five years.

As the triumphant national leader, Gandhiji established a rapport with the new Viceroy, Lord Linlithgowand, in the face of the misgivings of the radical wing of the National Congress, advised acceptance of office on the basis of gentlemanly assurances of non-interference by Provincial Governors from Linlithgow, Gandhiji took one more step towards establishing equality between the British and the Indian.

The federal scheme had become obsolete before it could be implemented. Political India, with the consciousness of a new power pulsating through its veins, would neither accept reserve powers nor any dose of princely autocracy. A World War intervened, and the British desper-

ately clung to their hold over India. The chasm between promise and action, words and deeds widened. Gandhiji was compelled to take India and himself through another ordeal of fire in August 1942. The Quit India movement, perhaps failed in its immediate object. But the check to Indian nationalism was momentary; Gandhiji's rebellion and Subhas Bose's INA adventure finally sealed the fate of the British raj.

Final souring of relations

The Second World War was a real life and death struggle for the British people. In the year 1940-41 they made their last heroic stand as a world power. Gandhiji's revulsion to the great slaughter and his hostility to the raj further soured his relations with the British rulers in the last phase of his life.

The detractors of Mahatma Gandhi accused him of being in sympathy with the fascists; they said that his Quit India campaign was conceived in anticipation of the imminent Allied defeat. Is there any substance in this charge? Did Gandhiji, perhaps, make ambivalent statements which opened him to this accusation? I think the charge is not well-founded. In fact on the outbreak of the second World War he expressed his sympathy with the Allied powers and advised the Congress to offer unconditional cooperation. Gandhiji's socialist admirers were appalled by the Mahatma's reaction. The Congress indeed did not take a neutral stand as between the Allied and Axis powers; it asked the British government to declare its war aims, transfer power to Indian hands and secure India's willing cooperation in the war effort. Socialists, of course, did not like this equivocation; they held that it was an imperialist war and wanted the Congress to take a plunge into mass action.

Why then was Gandhiji accused of pro-Nazi sympathies? I feel his open letter to Herr Hitler was not much appreciated in the West. And this

probably was the starting point of the misunderstanding. Gandhiji likened the slaughter in Europe to a fatricidal war, mutual destruction in the fåshion of the ancient Yadavas. His heart was hardened. He was upset by the detention and conviction of his socialist friends like J.P. and Lohia. Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy in June 1940 (after the now inescapable defeat of France) that the ghastly manslaughter must be stopped; he thought that the British were obviously losing; their doggedness would only result in greater bloodshed. "... Is it not time to sue for peace for the sake of humanity? I do not believe Herr Hitler to be as bad as he is portrayed. It is due to suffering humanity that this mad slaughter should stop." (The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.LXXII, p 100) (This was exactly what Molotov had said in 1939 after the destruction of Poland.) Gandhiji at this stage offered to go to Germany and requested the Viceroy to inform the British Cabinet.

Mahatma Gandhi received, not unexpectedly, a cold reply. But the contents of his letter must have been conveyed to Winston Churchill who was now heading the British government. He was undaunted by the defeat of France and Dunkirk. He was resolved to fight to the bitterest end. He staked his hope on the ultimate intervention of America, and the inexorable clash between

Hitler and Stalin.

Churchill's prognosis proved to be correct. To want to end the slaughter which to Gandhiji seemed senseless or to stay clear of the two sides—the fascist and imperialist—was not immoral; what could be faulted was his wrong understanding of the Nazi leader and his aims. Perhaps, this unfortunate communication to the Viceroy was at the root of the widespread denunciation of Gandhi as fascist agent.

Formidable opponent

Wavell who replaced Linlithgow was a military general and could not forgive Gandhiji's "seditious movement" in the midst of the war. While a gentleman and outwardly courteous, he harboured a deep grudge against Mahatma Gandhı. Wavell has confided his innermost thoughts and feelings to his diary. He called Gandhiji's communications "malevolent" and described him as "a malignant old man." (The Viceroy's Journal -Wavell Diary, p. 185).

One little incident throws revealing light on the mind of the last but one representative of the mighty British empire in India. In the early Twenties Lord Reading spoke of Gandhiji's "oriental courtesy" in appreciative terms. When the same courtesy and deference was shown to him by the Cabinet Mission in 1946 Wavell was scandalised: "I was frankly horrified at the deference



Sandhiji with Romain Rolland, visionaries

shown to Gandhi. When he expressed a wish for a glass of water, the secretary was sent to fetch it himself, instead of sending for a chaprasi; and when it didn't come at once Cripps hustled to see about it. Besides being undignified, I am sure this sort of thing does not pay; and will leave an unenviable legacy for the Viceroy and officials. Gandhi is a remarkable old man, certainly, and the most formidable of three opponents who have detached portions of the British Empire in recent years: Zaghlul and de Valera being the other two. But he is a very tough politician and not a saint." (Ibid, p. 236, italics added)

The former army Commander was baffled by the complexity of India's problems and the personality of its greatest leader. He denounced him as "an unscrupulous old hypocrite" for his having accomplished "his life work of driving the British from India." Obviously this was for Wavell an unpardonable offence. It was a case of total incomprehension of the new world that was struggling to be born. Wavell, not surprisingly, could not handle the formation of the interim government nor prevent the Calcutta massacres nor a general outbreak of communal violence. Wavell accused Gandhiji of wrecking the plan of the Cabinet Mission "which might possibly have secured a united India" and prevented the post-partition massacres. He also said that Gandhiji did not work for "an understanding with the Muslims when his influence might have secured it." Wavell thought that Gandhiji was a quibbling lawyer and a baniya who drove a hard bargain. It was an unbalanced and unfair judge-

His successor Lord Mountbatten quickly perceived that Nehru and Patel had become impatient, and were prepared to ditch Gandhiji's dream of Indian unity in order to be able to achieve power untrammeled by Jinnah and his Muslim League. Mountbatten also saw that Jinnah

would be prepared to accept a truncated Pakistan rather than place himself in a subordinate position to the Nehru-Patel Congress. Nobody listened to Gandhiji's plea for a government headed by Jinnah but responsible to the legislature as a stepping stone to independent united India.

Sun sets on British Empire

The British empire's most talented and powerful pro-Consul in India, Lord Curzon, was prophetic when he said that "India is the pivot of our empire. If the empire loses any other part of its dominion we can survive, but if we lose India the sun of our empire will have set."

Another imperialist, Churchill, also had predicted that " the loss of India would mark and consummate the downfall of the British Empire. That great organism would pass at a stroke out of life into history. From such a catastrophe there could be no

recovery."

It was Curzon's ambition to assist the National Congress, which he claimed was tottering to a collapse, to its final demise. The Indian National Congress refused to die. When Mahatma Gandhi took over its leadership and reorganised it in 1920-21 he had become disillusioned with British rule in India. "The British Empire is a Satanic system and I have dedicated my life to destroy it," Gandhiji declared. A succession of British pro-consuls, including Wavell, acknowledged that Gandhiji "hastened their departure," of course, aided by the flow of history.

Supreme tragedy

The moment of his triumph, however, proved to be the moment of supreme tragedy. The unity of India was broken, and the resulting bloodbath shattered Gandhiji's lifework. Mahatma Gandhi made the supreme sacrifice in order to bear witness to his faith. More he could not do.

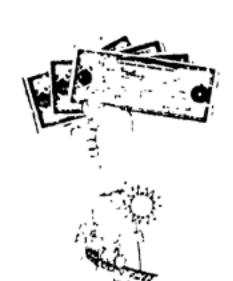
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Food versus crude?

he sun is too hot and the people are lazy; the farmers are tradition-bound and the workers are indifferent; so the poor countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America cannot have any economic development. Such superstitions that once pervaded the pundits in the West as well as in the East have long fallen by the wayside. The Third World in the last three decades has surged ahead belying all those sceptics. Topographical harshness having been modulated to a certain extent, some of the relatively advanced countries of the third world (India is one of them) have entered a more complex phase of economic growth where socio political relations are coming in to play as so many barriers to further progress.

India has seena sizeable rise in the irrigation potential—from 22 6 million hectares in 1950-51 to 56.6 million hectares in 1979-80. It has been a gigantic attempt, though madequate relative to need, to rescue agriculture from the vagaries of monsoon. In the first two decades the construction of additional irrigation potential was one million hectares a year on an average Since 1979-80, in particular, the rate has more than doubled. The increase in the application of fertiliser is even more striking---from 0 3 million tonnes in 1960-61 to 2 3 million tonnes in 1970-71, and 5.5 million tonnes by 1980-81. The upward trend has continued thereafter Meanwhile, Indian agriculture, according to some economists, is running into the law of diminishing returns-a classical law which means that the rate of increase in output declines as more inputs are pressed into service. It is this law, set against the geometric growth of population, which worried Malthus more than a century ago. In India too, during the five years since 1978-79, for example, there is no let-up in the ever greater deployment of agricultural inputs like irrigation, feitiliser, and all that; but the return in terms of output is sluggish and volatile. The 1978-79 peak of foodgrains harvest was marginally crossed only in 1981-82; in the other three years the crop was far below.

The shortfall of agriculture in the current year (1982-83) is sought to be explained by New Delhi as a curse of bad weather. Indeed, more than three-fifths of India's cultivated areas still do not have assured water supply, and therefore remains exposed to the risks of drought. The stagnation and the erratic course of Indian agriculture,



RANJIT SAU

however, is not entirely a matter of any inexorable law of diminishing returns and unfavourable weather conditions. True, India now occupies the fourth rank (after China. USA and the USSR) in the world in the consumption of nitrogenous fertilisers, and the sixth position amongst the users of phosphatic fertilisers. In terms of per hectare input of nutrients, however, the country is still far behind the nations with modern, progressive agricultural sector, or even the world average. Indian agriculture has yet a long way to go before it can meet with the law of diminishing returns. As for the threat from drought, the widespread irrigation network is supposed to tackle precisely that contingency. Then, what has gone wrong? Why is the agricultural production response not commensurate with the rising inputs?

Some four million hectares of major irrigation potential in India is not actually used. There is, in a sense, a perennial excess capacity in our irrigation system. And it is the bigger farmers who have a lower proportion of irrigation in their land, compared to the smaller ones. Furthermore, they use lesser quantum of fertiliser per unit of fertilised land. There are indications that, in the pursuit of their private profit at a reduced labour cost, they are diverting fertilisers to unirrigated crops that have lower productivity, whereas the marginal farmers cannot afford to apply fertiliser even in irrigated areas.

Consequently, the average yield per unit of fertilisers in the country is coming down. In a word, the bigger farmers are engaging neither land nor other agricultural inputs to such use that is optimal from the point of view of national product maximisation. Here is a case of stark conflict between an individual's profit and the country's overall gain. Irrigation and fertiliser, instead of being used as complementary inputs, are in fact

appearing largely as substitutes as it were in the eyes of rich farmers.

The agricultural stagnation of recent years is, to a certain extent, a product of New Delhi's policy that seems to have been inspired by the canons of neo classical economics. Prices of oil, fertilisers, and other items of the public sector are being raised to bring them in line with what the government calls their economic costs. Being increasingly expensive, such agricultural inputs can now be bought only by richer farmers, and then an increasing proportion of those would be diverted to unirrigated crop, depriving even the irrigated land of small and marginal farmers. How can agricultural productivity rise under such circumstances? The price of oil has been increased several times with a view to gathering funds for investment in the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC), and it has raised the cost of fertilisers in the process. If this is being done in the name of acquiring selfsufficiency in the production of crude petroleum, then a veritable conflict is taking shape between the current official policies designed for financing this particular objective on the one hand, and the conditions for promoting selfsufficiency in toodgraing on the other. There is no mberent reason tor any special contradiction between stepping up, all food production and that of crude production besides what usually prevails between any two economic activities under budgetary constraints. On the contrary, these two lines of activity are, at a certain level, complementary. But, given the social structure of India as it is, and the particular brand of fiscal and financial policies the government of India is now following, the road to self-sufficiency in crude petroleum in India perhaps passes through the fields of stagnant agriculture.

The world market of foodgrains is dominated by only four exporting countries, namely, the USA, Canada, Australia, and Argentina, while that of petroleum has always (except for a short spell of ten years between 1973 and 1983) been more competitive and is likely to remain so. For strategic reasons, in a country like India, self-sufficiency in foodgrains should have precedence over crude petroleum, in the event of a question of real choice between the two It is far more advisable to devise policies for attaining these twin objectives And that is possible. But then the social and political relationships would come to stand in the way of implementing such policies.





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UNION CARBIDE

LOOKING GLASS

Major reshuffle after Karnataka byelection?



Raghupathy: able

After the 15 May Kanakapura constituency byelection in Karnataka in which Mr Ramakrishna Hegde is contesting, a major cabinet ex pansion might take place. This time, the minority communities which have been demanding cabinet berths will not have their requests turned down. There are 11 independent minority community MLAs who are supporting the present Janata Party-led government. According to rehable sources

Mi Hegde (if he continues as CM and indications are that he will certainly win the Kanakapura seat) will induct one of the most prominent minority community MLAs into his ministry. Mi Hutchamasti Gowda from Hulivurdurga constituency. In the expansion some present ministers will have their portfolios changed. Among the names being bandied about is that of the present tourism and information minister. Mr. M. Raghupathy, the man who defeated Congress(1)'s C.M. Ibrahim. He is likely to be made the industries minister as he has performed creditably in his present cabinet position.

Rajiv to tackle GPCC(I)problems

The infighting in the Gujarat Congress(I) has become so complex that the AICC may soon entrust its youngest general secretary Rajiv Gandhi with the unenviable task of bringing the tactions together again. Mrs Rajendra Kumarı Bajpai who is now in-charge of the party affairs in the state has earned the wrath of the dissidents who have been grumbling about her being bla-

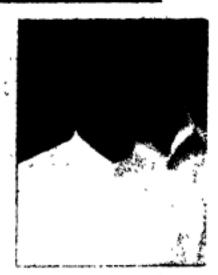


Rajiv: cornering power?

tantly pro-Madhavsinh Solanki. The problem of the high command has been to find someone who would be respected by both the factions. Rajiv Gandhi apparently fits the bill, and the process of shifting charge to him has it seems, already been set in motion. The party's candidate for the recent Rajva Sabha election, Irshad Mirza was handpicked by Rajiv Gandhi while the candidates of the chief minister and Kamalapathi Tripathi were unceremoniously brushed aside. Meanwhile the immediate problem of the high command will be to find a replacement for the GPCC(I) presidentship as the incumbent Mahant Vijaydasji is reluctant to give up his ministerial post. The organisational elections are due in July. The AICC(I) canon against members holding two posts is going to be strictly adhered to, except of course in the case of their leader. Mahant Vijaydasji has been holding twin responsibility for the last one year mainly because he enjoys the confidence of the chief minister.

Rajiv-Dhawan tussle may have wide-ranging consequences

The Adik-Ramrae Vasantadada Patil tangle in Maharastra has resulted in a Rajiv Gandhi R.K. Dhawan tussle in New Delhi. Mr Dhawan who has made no secret about his allegiance to Mr Adik, is using his clout to get Mr Aseer crowned as MPCC(I) president Rajiv Gandhi on the other hand believes that only the chief minister can carry the party through the 1985 elections. Mr M.L. Fotedar and Arun Nehru are also ranged behind



Dhawan anti-Rajiv?

the Maharashtia chief minister. Mr Dhawan who is going all out to checkmate Mi Gandhi is in constant touch with a certain Mr Bhama who always accompanies Mi Adik on his frequent trips to New Delhi and Mr Adik seldom fails to get an appointment with the Prime Minister. Mi Ascer, the cause of all this turmoil, is not too keen on becoming the MPCC(I) president. If the Rajiv Dhawan rift deepens, it is bound to have far-reaching consequences in the organisation and functioning of the Congress(I)

T N Congress(I) wooing AIADMK

The Tamil Nadu Congress(I) has started thinking in terms of luring either the DMK or the ruling AIADMK for the elections scheduled for 1985, if not for a snap mid-poll. Knowing that the DMK is losing its grip rapidly, the Congress(I) is trying to veer closer to the AIADMK. Congressmen are trying to forget the disastrous electoral alliance with the DMK in the 1980 elections. They, however, prefer to recall the halcyon davs of 1977 when they aligned with the AIADMK for the parliamentary polls. Mrs Gandhi had this alliance in mind when she allotted Rs 63 crores as drought relief for Tamil Nadu. Mrs Gandhi may also try to woo the Andhra Pradesh chief minister N.T. Rama Rao knowing too well that without the support of the Telugu Desam, the Congress(1) does not stand much of a chance in Andhra Pradesh

Arjun Singh begins to panic

The Madhya Pradesh chief minister Arjun Singh has started taking serious note of the dissident activities of the former union minister V.C. Shukla and his brother S.C. Shukla, who has been knocking at the Congress(I) doors for quite sometime now. The chief minister has started wooing Laxmi Narayan Induriya, lieutenant of V.C. Shukla Mr Induriya was expelled from the party in 1981 for convening a meeting of party MLAs to highlight the failure of the chief minister in implementing the 20-point programme. But Mr Induriya has surprisingly been missing from the last three teams of dissidents who have been going to New Delhi. Now he has been made member of the non-official citizens probe committee of MLAs to enquire into allegations against the Bhilai police. During the ariel survey of flood-affected areas, the only MLA chosen to accompany the chief minister was Mr Induriya.

'India does indulge in a lot of shadow boxing'

uave, 52, and with humour puckering his eyes and mouth, Jagdish Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana, Nepal's new ambassador to India is the kind of diplomat, best-selling authors invite to their fictional parties. Sentient, handsome of course, fashionably greying, immaculately turned out, cultured in several languages and unflappable: the ultimate guest who would be the centre of attraction and would go right on talking even if the chandelier above the table crashed onto the avocado salad, the roast lamb and vintage wine.

I once commiserated with him on his brother losing a ministerial job and he replied with hardly a pause that he too felt sad to see Lord Carrington step down but then, in politics-the shrug of a well-tailored shoulder—these things happen. To a foreign diplomat who expressed his government's genuine happiness in the future of Nepal's relations with India as a result of Mr Rana's stewardship, the cool reply over a glass of chilled champagne was that the country in question had its own relationship to foster with both countries.

"Friendship between India and Nepal," he told me, "is time-tested. It rests on firm foundations, but what we need to develop is a better understanding in India of the aspirations of the Nepalese people now. We cannot expect Nepal to live in the 18th century. This must be understood in India in its proper perspective. If it is, there should be no problems in our close relationship. I feel that all friendly countries should accept the judgment of the people of Nepal."

With just two crowded days left for his departure for Delhi, Mr Rana invited me to his family house in Kathmandu with almost all its contents packed and wrapped in gunny. Scrawled across them in red paint was the legend: H. E. Ambassador Rana. Straight to the point. No

flourishes.

"Please forgive the mess," he said.
"There's hardly a place left to sit in,"
but there was, in a room dominated
by a pastel portrait of his vivacious
wife, Shanti. Waiting to be shoved
away into some last minute container were a Russian ikon, a Tibetan
thankha, a collection of pink alabaster animals, a pile of records topped
with This is Cher, and a framed
greeting card from their Majesties
the King and Queen of Nepal, with a

Nepal's ambassador to India, Jagdish Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana, tells DESMOND DOIG

portrait of the royal tamily.

Viewing Kalyan Singh, my photographer friend setting up his gear, he said, "I hope people don't think I'm wearing uniform. These Nepalese buttons belonged to my grandfather. They're gold. Made in England. I think they look good on my favourite blazer." Grandfather was from a ruling Rana family who lived at a time when uniforms, decorations and household bric-a-brac came from London and Rana houses owed more to the West thantoNepal"My grandfather was exiled for his progressive ideas," Mt Rana said as we settled to talk.

"You know, this is my first diplomatic assignment to India, where I've spent a good 20 years of my life. I speak Hindi, Urdu and Bengali. I was educated first in North Point, Darjeeling, then St Xavier's, Calcutta, on to St Xavier's, Patna, Benaras Hindu University and Lucknow University. I graduated from BHU and

It is suggested that Nepal is not a truly democratic country. This is very difficult to answer. What do they mean by democracy? Is chaos democracy? (Is) concentration of power in the presidential system (democratic)? did my post-graduate studies at London University. Naturally I have many friends in India, in government, in the secretariat. I have known the present foreign secretary since 1956. I have close personal relations with all the senior members of the external affairs ministry. Yes, I've met Mrs Gandhi but I cannot claim to know her well. Maybe she may not recognise me.

"There's something that worries me. Many Indians believe and say that Nepalese are anti-Indian. I think this is a very false notion because to follow an anti-Indian policy cannot be favourable to Nepal. What we are is pro-Nepalese, and if this is misunderstood as an anti-Indian feeling, it's not fair. We naturally have to look after Nepal's interests and this has to be understood by our Indian friends. We understand their sensitivity, we understand their security concerns, but Nepal has to look after herself, without a foreign presence whether Indian or Chinese or Rus-

"To have this foreign rivalry develop in Nepal cannot be in the interests of the country. This will have to be understood by our Indian friends also. That will be a large part of my job, explaining our views and sentiments while understanding theirs.

"India feels we are keeping both India and China equidistant in our dealings. But what is the alternative? Culturally, religiously, ethnically there is so much in common between our two countries. But in our external policies, in our external relationships, in the conduct of our foreign policy we have to bear in mind that we are an independent sovereign kingdom between two large Asian entities, a fact expounded by King Prithvi Narayan Shah, the founder of our present royal dynasty, in the mid-18th century.

"I will be very aware when I am in Delhi, among old and good Indian friends and colleagues, that I am a Nepalese, first and foremost.

"You know, I think it is only a matter of time before India recognises Nepal's desire for a zone of peace. They will, I'm sure, change their minds. It is a completely erroneous belief that the draft of this proposal was shown to the Chinese first. It was shown to nobody. It was His Majesty's own, completely uninfluenced idea.

"Our idea for a zone of peace has been bandied about for a long long time, but I'll recapitulate. We want

to concentrate on development, and for development we want stabilityinternal stability. Nepal is a small country and we cannot afford instability within the country because we want to concentrate all our energies on development. Our people want a better life. They no longer are satisfied with what they're getting.

"We recently have had very important exercises. A referendum, general elections and now all elections of the panchayat units, including the villages, have been finalised. If the government doesn't follow up, if we don't concentrate on development,

we won't get anywhere.

66 Tt is suggested that Nepal is not a Ltruly democratic country. This is very difficult to answer. What do they mean by democracy? Is chaos democracy? A concentration of power in the presidential system? An indisciplined free for all? What are the basic pillars of democracy? We have an independent judiciary. We have a national *panchayat*. We have a Public Service Commission. We have an executive. Now we have gone through elections on the basis of adult franchise. This, to me, is democracy, but if you are talking of how it is functioning, well there may be many opinions of how democracies are functioning anywhere in the world.

"Yes, I am aware of the criticism that our media is not entirely free, that there has been a reduction in press freedom. I don't think so. Look at the daily newspapers. They write against anyone, against the Prime Minister, the government. I don't think this is curtailing the press. I'm satisfied it isn't. I think, as a matter of fact, that we should examine the financial background of particular newspapers to ascertain whether they can meet charges of character assassination and suitably compen-

sate the injured person.

"You ask what the Prime Minister, Mr Surya Bahadur's visit to India has achieved. Judging from newspaper reports it seems positive. One of my chief concerns in India will be to ensure the agreements stand. Progress on agreed projects is not as satisfactory as it should be, in my opinion. There is a strong feeling about this in Nepal. When we talk we agree about everything. But often the baby isn't born and sometimes it's a still-birth. It will be my duty to try, impress upon the government of India to avoid this kind of thing... when things are said. When the Prime Minister visits India and there are agreements on this and that. When His Majesty the King makes a state visit and there are agreements. on both sides, it gets printed in the newspapers, is aired on the radio. The expectation of people goes up and then when they do not see things materialise they get confused and dissatisfied. We have had this problem with India.



We consider India a very important country and we take Indians very seriously. We want these feelings reciprocated. We want India. to take us seriously too. Friendship has to be nurtured and taken great care of. It cannot, it must not, be taken for granted.

"Sometimes there are studied leaks to the newspapers. Sometimes again a great deal of misinformation has appeared in even the most reputable Indian newspapers and we may be forgiven for believing that it was done purposely. I do not blame the

newspapers for this.

"Our Prime Minister was asked about the projected Nepalese trade corridor to Bangladesh but he did not discuss it with Mrs Gandhi. But it must continue to be discussed at official levels. Why not? If you have good relations with a land-locked country and another friendly country is willing to provide transit facilities, I think no offence should be taken. Specifically, I don't think India should mind it. I think she should help us find an alternative port be cause Calcutta is already congested. Facilities there are not sufficient for Indian needs, let alone ours, as Calcutta has to cope with Bengal, Bihar and UP.

"I have not discussed this perso nally but if this question is raised l would expect a sympathetic attitude from India. The corridor would be for road and rail transit. We are already using Chittagong port but by air only. There are many transit countries in the world, particularly in Europe. Consignments destined for land-locked countries have to pass through all Europe at no additional cost. They have certain treaties, certain arrangements, whereas we don't even have a fixed rate. We are trying to find one. We must. You know by any standardyou can check records and figureson our imports the transit cost is so expensive that we pay 35 per cent to

40 per cent to a dollar. For exports, just transit costs, it's 20 per cent to 25 per cent. Now this is very very high and is done on black market prices, not on cost. The consumers here are suffering and paying a high price.

"There is an international resolution on trade with land-locked countries but India is not a signatory to it But the issue has to be faced. It has to be developed. India is very preoccupied with so much on its mind. Unfortunately it does indulge in a lot

of shadow boxing.

"There has been some unfortunate talk about India and Nepal putting restrictions on the free movement of their nationals in each other's countries. This is not correct, It presumably has been rumoured because of Dr Gurung's Commission, at present operative, to look into migration and immigration both. It is neither desirable nor possible to seal our borders."

My tape-recorder suddenly turned violent. Its battories flew across the room, the tape made an ominous noise and the red light developed a terminal blink. Mr Rana retrieved the batteries, gave the machine a tirm shaking and proclaimed it to be fit again. I thought, as we settled back to talk, that the incident might well prove indicative. In future, when sensitive issues became un stuck between the two coun**u**ries, Nepal's new ambassador might well shake up a lot of maltunctioning debris lying about and put new life into it. A thought.

"The Kosi project is no longer a bone of contention. But we must keep talking about it. We must weigh who is being benefitted more. Our requirements are very little. But our requirements will have to be fulfilled first. Naturally. Then, when our requirements are met, the entire benefits can go elsewhere. We are prepared to take up any projects. study them together and if we are not capable of finding answers then (we can) appoint experts and consultants. We are perfectly open about this. It is an important issue. Water power is our greatest natural resource

"I would like to say in conclusion that I am looking forward to my new assignment. We consider India a very important country and we take Indians very seriously. We want these feelings recipiocated. We want India to take us seriously too Friendship has to be nurtured and taken great care of. It cannot, it must not, be taken for granted. No meaningful relationship, and ours is such, can be taken for granted.

"I hope to have a healthy working arrangement with the press. My previous experience as a diplomat tells me this is most important. I have found them generous and well informed. They do a good job. Maybe certain criticism will goad me to a little more action."

PUNJAB

Murder in the house of god

Tension increases as the DIG's killer, allegedly, hides in the Golden Temple

Amritsar: The Punjab situation took an even more violent turn on 25 April when DIG police (Jullundur Range), A. S. Atwal was shot dead just outside the Golden Temple. The killer, till the time of writing, remained hidden somewhere in the Golden Temple. A letter from the police to the gurudwara management requesting that they try and find the culprit, has, so far, not even

been acknowledged.

The DIG was given a state funeral in Jullundur on 26 April. The various political and religious leaders who live within the precincts of the gurudwara condemned the killing but they claimed that the killer had not entered the gurudwara. The police point out that had he tried to escape in any other direction, he would have been caught immediately since there were large numbers of policemen in the area. SSP, Surjit Singh Bains, denied reports that the

DIG's own armed bodyguard and driver had fled the moment the shooting started. "This is nonsense," he said, quickly stating that the only reason they could not take action was because it happened fast and the assailant entered the gurudwara immediately. He added that there was absolutely no doubt about where the killer had gone. When asked whether the police were planning to take any action regarding the Golden Temple if they did not receive a satisfactory reply from the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) and the gurudwara management, Mr Bains said that it was the government's policy not to forcibly enter gurudwaras.

The bazar outside the temple reopened towards the end of last month but the almost tangible tension in the air remained. The shopkeepers seemed reluctant to talk about the incident and most of them

said they had run for their lives once the shooting began. A few of them also said that they had seen the DIG's driver go off after the officer was killed and one man said that he had seen the bodyguard trying to load his stengun, but somehow failing to fire. According to the police, the DIG entered the precincts of the gurudwara around 10.00 am and somebody stopped to talk to him. This has created the impression that the killer may have been acting in collusion with some other people, although when the killing occurred, he was alone. Mr Atwal emerged from the main gate of the Golden Temple around 11.00 am and was shot dead even as he was holding prashad in his hands while he walked towards the booth to collect his shoes. He was killed outside the darshani deori by shots fired from a

semi-automatic carbine. Several shots were fired, one of

which even killed an 11-year-old boy,

Virinderjit Singh, who had gone to

the gurudwara to offer a prayer of thanks for having done well in his examination. He had just emerged from the gurudwara, accompanied by his mother and grandfather, when he was so tragically killed. Another person, a CRPF constable on leave,

Kulwinder Singh, a young man of 22, was injured when he was shot in the stomach as he was about to enter the gurudwara. His condition, at the

time of writing, was reported to be extremely serious.

The police provided the description of the killer as being a young man around 25 years of age, with a flowing beard, a wheatish complexion and a slim build. He was wear ing a black turban and a long, white kurta with grey pyjamas. According to the SSP, a message was im-mediately sent to the gurudwara, asking for the killer to be handed over to the police. This was followed by a letter to the secretary and the deputy secretary of the SGPC and the management of the Durbar Sahib. However, there was no response to any of these. Sant Harchandsingh Longowal told this correspondent that what had happened was a terrible thing, but when asked about the letter, he claimed he knew nothing about it.

The president of the SGPC, Mr Tohra, left for Delhi without giving any comment but the other SGPC members said that anybody among

Bhindranwale (sitting) with armed guards, blaming the government



the thousands who entered the gurudwara that day could be the killer, so they could not find him. Meanwhile, both, Sant Longowal and Sant Bhindranwale said that they felt that the killing was the work of the government. Sant Bhindranwale added that this had been done deliberately to make their dharmayudha morcha unsuccessful and that it was a big conspiracy to enable the police to enter the Durbar Sahib.

Yet, a number of questions regarding the brutal assassination of Mr Atwal remained unanswered. First, immediately after the Sikh youth gunned down the DIG and literally walked through the bazar leading to the SGPC, why was there no attempt to either apprehend him or shoot him down? Mr Atwal's personal security men, who were sitting in a car in Ghanta Ghar Chowk, were not the only policemen present around the temple at that time. In the area, a large police force had been deployed, equipped with arms, wireless sets and vehicles. Yet none of the policemen present took any action while the assassin walked away in broad daylight.

There is another reason why the police force deployed in the area should have been more alert whenever Mr Atwal visited the temple (according to official circles in Punjab. Mr Atwal was a religious

person and often visited the temple). The DIG was a marked man: he was a key person involved in the planning and execution of operations against the extremists and an attack on him had, at no stage, been ruled out. Yet, not even a single plain clothes policeman discreetly accompanied him to the temple on his visits. Why was this so?

The Punjab government has, it seems, reached a dead-end in its efforts to track down the assailant. Though the government has held meetings and ordered a statewide alert, it is unlikely that this would yield any results. Only an intensive search of the SGPC might uncover the assailant, but the government is hesitant to do this for obvious reasons. The attitude of the politicians ruling the state is evident from the following episode. Just after the Amritsar incident, a wireless message was sent to a group of dissident ministers, proceeding to Delhi to meet Rajiv Gandhi, asking them to attend an emergency meeting of the cabinet. The message was ignored and the ministers thought it more important to carry on to Delhi instead. Meanwhile, Union minister for home, Mr P. C. Sethi has assured the people that action will certainly be taken soon.

Tavleen Singh

KRISHNA WATERS ACCORD

Strengthening the bond

Madras: At last, after waiting for over 100 years, the dream of the residents of Madras is being finally fulfilled. The proposal for the supply of Krishna river water to a parched Madras afflicted by chronic water scarcity, was first mooted in 1881 by Colonel Ely, the chief engineer of the erstwhile Madras Presidency. But the proposal had to wait for a century for the 'two Ramas to bring Krishna' to Madras, as a local evenin-

ger put it.

On 19, April, chief minister M. G. Ramachandran of Tamil Nadu and chief minister N.T. Rama Rao of Andhra Pradesh signed an agreement in Hyderabad for the transportation to Madras of 15 tmc of Krishna water in a 500-km long open channel named 'Telugu Ganga'. After taking evaporation losses into consideration, the reservoirs that service Madras will be richer by twelve tmc of water, four times the amount that is being presently consumed by Madras citizens. The Rs 720 scheme which will take three to six years for completion will also irrigate, en route, 5.75 lakh acres of drought-prone areas in Rayalseema and Nellore district of Andhra

Pradesh. The project is thus mutually beneficial.

The agreement was signed against a backdrop of much camaraderie and was described by the two ebullient CMs as "historic and one that will further strengthen the brotherhood of neighbouring states." The accord

doeth intend highlight the streng-thening of the thead that has emerged among the southern states, with the dawn of 1983. The citizens of Madras cannot easily forgive Mrs Gandhi for her betrayal **tor tardiness** "In implementation; if one wished to be charitable) of her promise made in February 1976, soon afres the Tamils were making a slow receivery from a frightful water searcity: She had then assured the people of Madras at a public meeting that 15 tmc of Krishna water would be provided for Tamil Nadu, with Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh an**d Karnataka'each** contributing five tmc of water in accordance with what was stated in Parliament 13 years ago. A formal agreement was signed ' later ' ' in Delhi by the four states. But the scheme never got going due to the difference of opinion among the contributing states on whether the water should be transported in open channels or conduit pipes. In 1977, at a meeting convened by the union irrigation minister, it was decided to permit Tamil Nadu to draw 13 tine of Krishna water from the Srisailam reservoir in Andhra Pradesh. The draft to be signed for this scheme appeared to be innxed, thanks to the rapid turnover of chief ministers in AP What did not happen in the four years of the Congress(1) regime, did happen within four months of Telugu Desam's rule. The agreement reached by NTR and MGR serverto widen the gulf between south India and the Congress(I).

The cost of the scheme will be shared by the two states in proportion to the quantum of water utilised by each. According to present estimates, Tamil Nadu will have to cough up Rs 220 crotes and AP Rs 500 crores. Both the CMs have requested the centre to fund the entire project or at least a part of it. On the occasion, NTR seized the opportunity to ask for a gift from MGR—the manuscripts pertaining to the Telugu literary heritage and culture pre-

NTR and MGR sign the agreement, brotherly affection



served, at the moment, in the Saraswathi Mahal Library in Thanjavur, in the Connemara Public Library and at the Fort St George in Madras. MGR promised to consider the request and there is no reason why he

should not comply.

At the time of signing the draft, both the Ramas emphasised that it was: an agreement between "brothers." NTR welcomed his counterpart as his 'elder brother' He said, "We have to resolve our problems in such brotherly affection." The big brother in turn said how happy he was to enter into an agreement with his "younger brother who is now the chief minister of a larger state than ours." He quelled critics

and trouble-makers who were trying to figure out which state was exploit: ing the other, with his observation, "It is not a question as to who between us has gained by this agreement. Those who have really gained are the people of the two states and the agreement will benefit future generations." NTR viewed the agreement as a "symbol of brotherhood between the Telugu and Tamil people " And lest the agreement caused further worry to the centre about the growing unity of the south that could be construed as a threat, NTR hastened to reiterate his oft-repeated opinion that "strong states make a strong centre"

Anita Pratap

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The hawks foiled unity talks

New Delhi: When the Jammu and Kashmir chief minister. Dr Farooq Abdullah, hosted a dinner at the Jammu and Kashmir guest house here on 23 April, the Congress(1) general secretary came for the talks along with Mr K. C. Pant, the Congress(I) high command's observer for the state. A member of the party's high command, Syed Mir Qasim, a former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir (who voluntarily relinquished his chair in 1975 for the late Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and ushered in a new phase in Kashmir politics) was sitting just two rooms away in the guest house at Prithviraj Road, was not called for the talks. Mr Mir Qasim's views on the need to have an understanding between the two parties was well-known. A few

days before the talks took place in the capital, Dr Faroog Abdullah had attended a dinner hosted by Mr Mir Qasini in Srinagar and both had agreed that there was a need for electoral adjustments between the Congress(I) and the National Conference (Dr Abdullah's party) Sved Mir Qasım had gone on record sayıng that a confrontation between the two parties was "ill-conceived and inadvisable." He had said that it his party decided to contest all the 76 Assembly seats in the 5 June elections, then he would not campaign for the Congress(1) candidates

The absence of Mr Mir Qasim from the dinner talks on 23 April, therefore, was significant. Dr. Abdullah, who is also the National Conference president, had come with a three-

Mn Oasim (lett) and Dr Abdullah confrontation all conceived?





member team. Initially, he let his party colleagues, Mr Pyare Lal Handoo, Mr Ghulam Mohiuddin Shah and Mr Bodhraj Bali talk to Mr Rajiv Gandhi and Mr Pant. The meeting, which began at 7.30 pm, went on well past 11.00 pm. In between, Dr Abdullah let the threemember team discuss matters in his absence. From the long parleys that night, the understanding which emerged was that the Congress(I) would be alloted 20 or 21 seats including five or six in the Kashmir valley, which is traditionally a National Conference stronghold. Dr Abdullah asked for a change in the state PCC(I) leadership. The two top men in the JammuandKashmir unit of the Congress(I), Mr Mufti Mohammad Syed, president, and Mr Ghulam Rasool Kar, vice-president, have been bitter critics of the National Conference in general and the Abdullah family in particular (Even while the unity efforts were on, Mr Mufti Mohammad Syed made a statement saying that his party would contest all the 76 seats.) Dr Abdullah told the Congress(I) high command that with these two gentlemen heading the PCC(1), electoral adjustments were not possible. He hinted that if people like Syed Mir Qasim were to be given a free hand, then the atmosphere could be conducive tor unity. The Congress(I) high command, however, thought otherwise.

Within Mr Rajiy Gandhi's circle of advisers itself, there was sharp rift on the Kashmir question. While Mr Vijay Dhar (son of the late Mr D. P. Dhar) favoured the line of conciliation advocated by Syed Mir Qasim, Mr Makhan Lal Fotedar and Mr Arun Nehru were hand in glove with Mi Mufti Mohammad Syed and Mi Ghulam Rasool Kar. Ultimately, the hawks seem to have prevailed.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi and Dr Farooq Abdullah are close friends in their personal lives. Efforts for the unity between the two parties, therefore, were made by each of them individually over the last two years. Since Dr Abdullah became the chief minister after the Sheikh's death in September last year and Mr Rajiv Gandhi was made AlCC(I) general secretary, this personal nexus was enlarged to the official level as well. The fact that the talks failed with such a background, therefore, shows that a somewhat serious faux pas had been committed. While it is difficult to put the blame on either party, certainly one cannot overlook the hawkish attitude of the present leadership in the Jammu and Kashmir PCC(1), which has damaged the process of rapprochement between the two parties since 1977 (when the Congress-I tried to vote out Sheikh Abdullah and install Mr Mufti Mohammad Syed as the chief minister. The promulgation of President's Rule by the Janata government at the centre foiled this plan).

After the efforts for adjustments between the two parties began, following a meeting Dr Abdullah had with the Prime Minister's principal secretary, Dr P. C. Alexander, in the presence of the Jammu and Kashmir Governor , Mr B. K. Nehru, in Jammu, Dr Abdullah issued a press statement saying the doors were open for unity. But when he went to Srinagar after making this statement, his mother, Begum Akbar Jehan Abdullah, is understood to have reacted sharply against the move. She is understood to have reprimanded her son for shaking hands with the party which had people like Mr Mufti Mohammad Syed and Mr Ghulam Rasool Kar in its leadership. She is believed to have told Dr Abdullah that if he were to join hands with these two bitter critics of the late Sheikh Abdullah, then she would probably have to openly campaign against such a move. This too played a role in the breakdown of the talks. Of course, Dr Abdullah showed his keenness for the understanding by asking Mr Rajiv Gandhi to withdraw these two men from the helm of party affairs in the state. Had this been conceded, perhaps, the path for unity would have been smoother.

Apart from this, within the National Conference, Dr Abdullah's detractors, his brother-in-law, Ghulam Mohammad Shah, Mr Ghulam Nabi Lochak and Mr Ashraf Khan (all former ministers of the Sheikh's cabinet, dropped by Dr Abdullah) also manoeuvered against the accord. They started a whispering campaign against Dr Abdullah in the Valley and influenced Begum Abdullah on this matter. During his talks in New Delhi, Dr Abdullah is understood to have conveyed his mother's views to Mr Rajiv Gandhi.

After the dinner talks on 23 April, Dr Abdullah flew back to Kashmir in an aircraft owned by the Punjab



Rajiv Gandhi: a personal rapport with Faroog Abdullah

government. He did not want to return to the capital for the second round of talks (which led to the failure of the efforts on 26 April). Instead, he wanted to send his threemember team. But Mr Rajiv Gandhi spoke to him on the telephone and the CM himself came to New Delhi. In the second round, the Congress(I) refused to accept the 21 seats offered by the National Conference and demanded 32. Considering the present strength of the two parties, Dr Abdullah refused to accept this. (In the 76-member dissolved House, the National Conference held 46 seats and the Congress-I ten.) Moreover, the absence of Syed Mir Oasim from the talks also created suspicion in the minds of the Kashmır leaders.

With the Congress(I) now opposing the National Conference in the 5 June elections, the future of the politics in Jammu and Kashmir for the next six years will be guided by the necessities of the present elections. The National Conference is bound to take an anti-centre stance. This electoral stance is bound to influence the future political pro-nouncements as well. For a sensitive state like Jammu and Kashmir, an anti-centre stance has complex implications. The political managers of the Congress(I) and their bureaucrat advisers certainly have ushered in a very dangerous phase in Kashmir politics by failing to reach an accord with the National Conference.

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya

Intelligence chief in party politics



P. C. Alexander: discussed tie-up

New Delhi: An interesting feature in the talks between the Congress(I) and the National Conference of Jammu and Kashmir was the participation of two top central government officials. Soon after the announcement regarding election dates was made, the director of the intelligence bureau, Mr T. V. Rajeshwar, flew to Srinagar and held a meeting with the chief minister, Dr Faroog Abdullah. The intelligence chief is understood to have impressed upon the National Conference leader the need to bring his party and the Congress(1) closer, in the interest of national unity.

Mr Rajeshwar was not the only officer from New Delhi to take on this unprecedented role. Within a few days of this meeting at Srinagar, the principal secretary to the Prime Minister, Dr P. C. Alexander, met Dr

Abdullah in the presence of the Jammu and Kashmir Governor, Mr B. K. Nehru, at Jammu and discussed the possibilities of a tie-up between the two parties After these two confabulations, Dr Abdullah came to New Delhi for a long discussion, over a dinner hosted by him, with Mr Rajiv Gandhi, on 23 April.

Though the unity efforts failed, the role played by these two top central government officers in the party politics of Jammu and Kashmir has raised many eyebrows. Even within the Congress(I) unit in the state, leaders are surprised at the way in which the Congress(I) high command relied on these two officers for its talks with the National Conference.

A Special Correspondent

The victory of bullets over words

Agartala: The dreaded guerrilla outfit of Tripura, Tripura National
Volunteers (TNV), received a deadly
blow last month when at least five of
its top leaders were nabbed by the
central reserve police force (CRPF)
On 13 April, "Major" Scahi Devbarma, the leader of TNV's aimed wing,
was arrested by a CRPF patrol in
north district. A week earlier, TNV
chief Chuni Koloi and his three colleagues were surprised when a platoon-strong CRPF patrol stumbled
on a rebel hideout at a wooded
village in north district and was able
to arrest them.

Kolor, a 25-year-old date-devil and the son of a rich landlord of Tehamurah, has been a major thorn in the flesh of Tripura's Marxist CM, Nripen Chakravarty, for the last five years. When Bejoy Hrangkhal, the godfather of the state's tribal insurgency, came overground in August 1980, the mantle of TNV leadership fell on Koloi. He is said to be the architect of over a hundred incidents, of hostilities in forest-clad northo-Tripura, which included

selected killings, ambushes and plunder of bazars belonging mostly to non-tribals. The CM wanted to buy peace by attempting to woo Koloi to the mainstream but he (Kolio) flamboyantly spurned all the feelers.

"Operation Chuni Kolot" began on 20 March atter the CM agreed to a suggestion of CRPF director general, S Dutta Choudhury to permit his force to mount an intensive combing under its own operational plan and command. On 3 April, the CRPF narrowly missed Koloi's gang near Manu but succeeded in recovering a lot of ammunition. On 5 April, the CRPF was on the trail of the guerrillas fleeing after looting the office of a rubber plantation. On 7 April, a CRPF patrol rushed to Karmacherra where Koloi's elusive gang looted three shops. At 4.45 pm on that same day, a CRPF DSP, Malaghar Singh, received a tip-off regarding the movement of rebels at a nearby torest. He asked for a platoon and then moved surreptitiously towards Machli Bazar site. After some time the party was split into two sections.

At 9 pm the section led by SI Khushali Ram contacted a fourmember rebel gang. The arrest was made without even sparring a bullet. As one of them whipped a revolver, Ram and constable D. B. Yadav pounced on him. The other jawans soon encircled the remaining extremists. The DSP then arrived on the scene and led the arrested to the nearest CRPF camp at Manu. Nobody realised at that time that they had really stumbled on a prize catch. Koloi revealed his identity only after a gruelling tive-hour interrogation, conducted by **b**. C. Dey, assistant commandant of 63 Bn of CRPF.

Koloi's other arrested colleagues included Kanak Tarak Koloi of Raipara village. He is considered to be the number three in the TNV hierarchy. A .38 loaded revolver, a .36 HE grenade, a diary giving a mine of information about TNV, seven rounds of assorted ammunition and, curiously, a telephone receiver, were recovered from them. In Chuni Koloi's possession were currency notes worth Rs 2,567.

On 11 April, a handcuffed and khaki-shirted Chuni Koloi was brought to the office of the DIG(SB), T. A. Khan. On further interrogation Koloi reportedly admitted that Bejoy Hrangkhal, who jumped bail in August 1982 and who is now living in exile with his wife Linda in Miani reserve forest in Chittagong Hills Tract in Bangladesh, is still his lead-



er. He described Binanda Jamatia, 42, leader of a south Tripura-based rebel faction, now negotiating with the CM the surrender of his 250member gang, as a "traitor."

Although Koloi's capture came as a major reverse to the five year old-TNV, authorities here believe that extremists still have plenty of arms (about 100 pieces including the automatics) and ammunition which they can use for re-invigorating the organisation. Koloi's deputy, Kartic Koloi, a cavaliar young man and school dropout like his mentor, is still at large. Hrangkhal, who has with him about 60 volunteers (Chuni Koloi pegged the number at 200) in Bang'adesh, has been promised help by armed Mizo rebels, the majority of whom are now wandering as fugitives in Bangladesh. The strength of the TNV is now estimated at 100 members and many of them are experts at laying ambush. The fodder of recruits can come from the state's 4.5 lakh tribals, most of whom reel under poverty, unemployment and frustration arising out of the slow pace of the restoration of their alienated land. The state's hilly terrains are also ideal for guerrilla derring-do. The Marxist government's vacillating attitude towards the rebels has also helped the insurgency to simmer, sources in security forces say. The CM, who does not treat the insurgency as a mere law and order problem, wants to wrap it up by wooing the rebels to emerge overground. It explains why the state police did not arrest Koloi even when many a time, it knew his



Koloi: ideniity revealed

whereabouts. Said union minister of state for home, Mr Nihar Ranjan Laskar, "The state government did not prevent the escape of the guerrillas into Bangladesh, even as our intelligence put the police on alert."

The CM does not believe that he is being taken for a ride by the rebels and that his softness towards Hrangkhal eventually encouraged the latter to again hit the guerrilla trail. "Everywhere in the world efforts are being made to contain insurgency through dialogues with the rebels. We are trying to change the heart of Jamatia and Hrangkhal in the same manner, instead of wasting costly bullets," the CM said.

Santanu Ghosh

RAJASTHAN

The dacoits are here to stay

Jaipur . Longatpura is a small village of Karauli (Vidhan Sabha) constituency in Rajasthan. Till recently, it was a typical, fairly normal village, humming with activity. Today, it resembles an eerie ghost village, its four hundred and some odd inhabitants having fled away in terror following an attack by dacoits. Almost two months have gone by and the villagers have not yet dared to return to their homes.

Trouble began when early in February. Kishori Jatav of the Longatpura village was alloted 15 bighus of land under the Prime Minister's 20-point programme, but the gujjars of the neighbouring village did not take too kindly to this. They sought the help of Bane Singh Gujjar, a notorious dacoit, and asked him to get Kishori Jatav to vacate the land. When Kishori did not oblige the dacoit, Bane Singh, along with his gangsters, Ram Prasad, Damodar Sheo Lal, Shivcharan Punkhu and

Nirju, attacked Kishori Jatay and his family. When the villagers intervened to help their friends, the dacoits fired at them and set their huts ablaze. They destroyed all that they could lay their hands on and molested the womenfolk. More than two dozen houses-were completely gutted, many villagers were injured and two with serious bullet injuries had to be hospitalised. The dacoits threatened the villagers of even more dire consequences if they did not vacate the land given to them. In panic, the villagers fled the very same night, taking whatever they could carry with them.

The wheels of official machinery then started moving. The Congress(I) MLA from the area, Janardhan Singh Gehlot, wrote about the incident to the chief minister, who in turn ordered the district collector of Sawai Madhopur to personally go to Longatpura and make arrangements for the villagers' safe return. Howev-

er, the collector and the SP did not think it worthwhile to visit Longar pura. Instead, they sent some policemen. When the police party approached, the village, they too were fired at by the dasoits.

Seeing this, the jatavs on their own, decided to-form an action committee to seek justice. and brought out a procession in Karauli, the subdivisional headquarters where they had been camping. But the only response that this got them was that the guijars threatened retaliation if the jatavs did not stay quiet. Moreov er, the guijars of the area also decided to put up a joint fight against the jatavs. A meeting of the gugars was presided over by the pradhan of the Rauli panchayat samiti. Hansa Ram (who is an ex-Congress-I MLA and notorious for patronising the dacoits of the area). However, when the sarpanch, Gyansingh Gujjar and the upsarpanch. Arjun Gujjar. appealed to their brethren to allow the jatavs to come back to their village, the houses of these two were set on fire, their cattle burnt alive and their standing crops destroyed. This incident occurred on 20 March

On 25 March, Janardhan Singh Gehlot raised the matter in the Vidhan Sabha alleging that the collector and SP did not take any action as they teared that if they did, so. they might invoke the anger offithe state homeminister Mr Govi**nd:Sin**ỳh Guijar (of the gujjar community). Janardhan Gehlot also openly charged that the criminals have full political protection as they are of ten seen moving around freely in the homes of political leaders. Thus, even the police are scared of the dacoits. At this, the home minister gave the assurance, on the floor of the House that the jatavs would be resettled in Longatpura and due compensations would be paid to the 'victims at the earliest. However, a month has gone by and there is no sign of any action been taken. The villagers are still living in terror, miles away from their own homes.

When Janardhan Singh Gehlot had been elected to the Vidhan Sabha in 1980, he had pledged in the presence of Mrs Gandhi, to ensure that his constituency was cleared of the dacoit menace. As promised, when he won, the anti-dacoity drive was intensified and the area remained peaceful for quite some time. However, peace did not last long. As Mr. Gehlot told SUNDAY, things took a turn for the worse when in the reshuffling of portfolios in the Rajasthan cabinet last October, the home portfolio was transferred to Govind Singh Gujjar. Since then, it is said, 18 new gangs have surfaced in the Karauli and Dholpur areas, and not surprisingly, all these gangs comprise guijar—the caste of the home minister.

Milap Chand Dandia

Will wrangling bring water and rice?

Trivandrum: While Kerala is slipping into a situation of unprecedented drought, having already been declared drought-affected, the partners of the United Democratic Front (UDF) ministry are wrangling over who will lead the drought relief work and what will be the modus operandi. The damage has been officially put at Rs 400 crores, which works out to a quarter of the state's current plan outlay.

In a typical situation which showed utter lack of coordination, in the government's functioning, the minister of irrigation, Mr M P Gan gadharan (Congress I) and the minister of revenue, Mr P. J Joseph (Kerala Congress-Joseph group), called for separate meetings on the same day to discuss the drought situation in Ernakulam, Idukki and Alleppev The collectors of these districts were in a dilemma but they finally decided to attend the revenue.

minister's conference since they are directly under his control, and sent their deputies to the other conference. After this incident, the government realised that this sort of wrangling would bring neither water nor finances and after a series of meetings, entrusted each minister with a district. The state Assembly in a unanimous resolution had asked the centre to extend an assistance of Rs 200 crores. Chief minister K. Karunakaran rushed to the capital with the begging bowl and managed to get Rs 9.5 crores sanctioned.

The drought has exposed the state government's ground water depart ment which has, so far, done little to tap ground water. The government had spent a fortune on the research work by the department but so far all its efforts have gone down the drain. There are five government agencies in the state working on ground water resources as well as a Swedish agen

cy which had even taken satellite photos of the ground water resources in the northern areas of Palghat, Ponant. But despite all this the state government has been able to identify only 120 sites to drill tube-wells while in its memorandum to the centre it states that 1000 tube-wells will have to be drilled, to avert a scarcity of drinking water. The state does not have enough rigs to be able to drill the tube-wells. The ground water department has five rigs but one of them is ineffective and to top it all the rigs are in Frivandium. Two drilling units in Trichur and Kottayam are lying unutilised for lack of an engineer to operate them. The government has only now begun to myite tenders for rigs

The supply of drinking water to most of the affected areas has become worfully madequate. Many parts of the state do not even have water tankers to carry drinking water to the affected areas. In some areas in the capital, water tanker drivers are not ready to ply since the public is in an agitated mood and there have been instances of drivers being manhandled when the trucks did not arrive in time. Moreover, the water tanker owners have complained that the state government has not settled the bills promptly.

What is perhaps the most frighten ing is that the two main rice production centres, Palghat and Alleppey, are also facing an acute scarcity of water. Around 107,000 hectares of agricultural land in Palghat has been lying parched, thereby affecting 80,000 families. In Kuttanad too the situation has deteriorated though it is not as desperate as Palghat.

There are reports that in Quilon district, private operators of jeeps are supplying drinking water at a rate of Rs 20 per jeep-load of water. This is probably the first time that water is being sold in a state crisscrossed by rivers, canals and backwaters. The chief minister has asked all district collectors to bypass normal bureaucratic procedures and sanction money for relief work. Apart from the lack of water supply, the state is also facing a shortage of rice and many ration shops have already displayed 'No-stock' boards. The civil supplies corporation plans to purchase rice from Punjab and Andhra Pradesh and distribute it through their outlets and the centre has been asked to give a supply of 135,000 tons of rice to help out the state.

The drought relief work will be an acid test for the UDF government, whose image has already been tarnished by its intra-coalition tussles and financial bunglings. The opposition is, meanwhile, waiting in the wings and watching to find out whether or not the government will be able to tide over this crisis too.

A. Asad

Sunny's editorial days

Calcutta: Sunil Gavaskar once had a Calcutta batsman, Gopal Bose as opening partner in an unofficial Test against Six Lanka. The partnership never went beyond that. Now they have come together again to shoulder resonsibility of a different sort. Suml Gavaskar is editor and Gopal Bose is contributing editor of a new cricket monthly Indian Cricketer brought out by Aajkaal publications. If the quality of the maugural issue, priced at a whopping Rs eight is any indication, this editorial partnership, it seems, will perhaps do only slightly better than the earlier one

The main offerings of the first issue are two biographical interviews with Imran Khan and G.R.Vishwanath by the editor himself. The interview with Vishwanath seems like an effort by the editor to do his brother-in-law (who was unceremoniously dumped after a record 87 Tests' uninterrupted run) a good turn. For, screams the introduction: When he (Vishwanath) has failed, India has failed to do well When he has done well the Indian team has done well and often been victorious...Vish will be back. What's as sure as light follows darkness." And the profile on Vishwanath by Gopal Bose has gems like. "Many a man would go miles to watch Vishy bat, the little man could do the same for his favourite--- Jhonnie (sic) Walker, Black Label," and "Thanks to the Indian selectors, Vishy must be the only man with over 6000 runs in Test cricket, whose head must have been

on the guillotine chop (sic), the maximum number of times, only to be saved at the last moment."

As editor, Gavaskai will have to fuse three tangentially different toles—editor, cricketer and executive of Nulon , Bombay In the manginal issue, apart from the two interviews, he has written an editorial The first ball (one hopes that there will not be a premature editorial, "end of the over"), he has organised articles by Ian Botham, Allan Lamb, reports on the West Indies series by Rohan Kanhai and a warm greeting from Sir Donald Bradman, Incidentally, the first issue also has a two-page black and white advertisement of Nirlon . Purists will no doubt grumble at this unethical bridging of two different professions

There is no consistency in style, but, on the contrary, there is a generous-dose of spelling mistakes (Mckenne, Benuad) and headings like 'Karnataka topples the tall order'

The sportsman-as-writer syndrome which has been gaining respectability, mainly due to the mushrooming of sports magazines, is certainly giving a new dimension to sports journalism. If all the players who suddenly realise that they are going downhill, turn to writing, the tribe of sports journalists may have to think of diversifying their interests and putting their critical acumen to better use.

Binoo K. John

The long march continues

Bombay: For the second time in a month a national neta approached the fetid bylanes of Dharavi on foot, amid the usual fanfare. But the glamour and euphoria that had earlier pervaded Rajiv Gandhi's partpadayatra through these lanes was missing this time. Many slumdwellers were not familiar with the tall, bearded man at the nucleus of the procession. Yet this was a padayatra with a difference. The lack of chaotic mobs was its very advantage. For Chandra Shekhar, unlike Rajiv Gandhi, had the time and patience to stop and receive every garland held out for him and allow all the women waiting to apply kumkum on his forehead, to do their

Ridiculed by sceptics and doubted by fellow Janata Party officials, late last month, Chandra Shekhar strode into Bombay with more than 2,000 km logged on his 4,000 km-padayatra from Kanyakumari to Rajghat. Starting off with a meek public response in the suburban slums and highways of Bombay, he marched into the crowded, narrow streets of central Bombay to a crescendo of loud and

rousing cheers from thousands.

For those who knew little about his Bharatyatra, it was an unimpressive procession in a city accustomed to gigantic morchas. But for the newspaper-reading lakhs of Bombay, Chandra Shekhar was "the man of the hour." The inevitable comparisons with Rajiv Gandhi's padayatra only heightened the pitch of the media blitzkrieg generated by Chandra Shekhar's arrival in this metropolis.

Chandra Shekhar, continuing on a seemingly inexhaustible reserve of energy, appeared to be satisfied with the response to the padayatra and is working everyday to crystalise the action programme which must emerge from the padayatra. As yet there is only talk about the need to mobilise the people and channelise pent up energies in the right direction. "Intellectuals' meetings" at most major rest stops along the route, like the one in Bombay, are intended to gauge the position of segments of the intelligentsia and ostensibly collect ideas for the action programme. But in essence such meetings are attempts to rally support by the party.

At the Bombay meeting chaired by a local official of the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), lawyer Ashok Desai, and attended to a varied collection of academics, party workers and youth leaders spoke and made recommendations ranging from a call for more seminars, to discussions of old problems, to a call for more mass consciousness raising programmes As in thousands of other places, Chandra Shekhar reiterated his disinterest in political power alone, and attempted to dissociate his padayatra from his role as president of the Janata Party. But for believers and non-believers alike, the ragged man who pronounced that a change of government alone would not eliminate our ills, appeared more than once as the leader of the next government .

Eventually, the padayatra and the Janata Party are inseparable and the state of the party after 25 June, when the vatra ends at Rajghat, is an open question. There is speculation that the rising public prominence of Chandra Shekhar will lead to a split if the party in the Subramaniam Swamy faction is seriously disgruntled.

Mr Morarji Desai has appealed to party members to bury their differences and support the padayatra regardless of their reservations about it.

Rajni Bakshi

Somersaults

Limca's isotonic salts to quench a summer thirst



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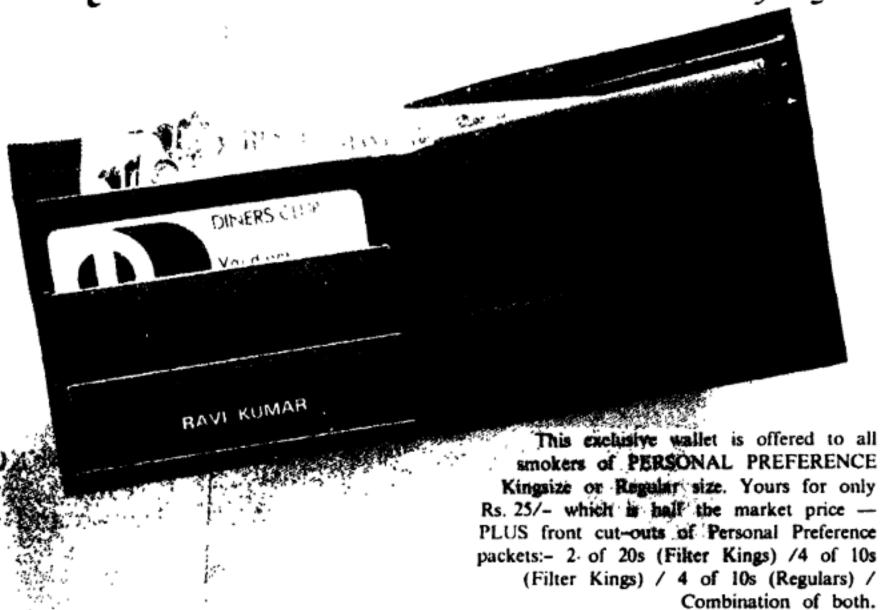
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THE WORLD

AC 大大 化二氯甲基 化氯化 (1917) (1917) (1917) [1917]

The hospitals in Paris: Architectural jewels



The Port Royal hospital: elegant in style

About six hospitals in Paris which are considered architectural jewels but have suffered the ravages of time are being renovated at a cost of about 35 million francs which will be shared by the state and city of Paris. One hospital Salpetiere, was built during the reign of Louis XIV on the site of a saltpetre works. It was used as an almshouse, a

lodging house, an old people's and orphans' home and there now remains a magmificent chapel designed by the great liberal architect Bruant. The Port Royal maternity home was originally an abbey, the cradle of the doctrines of Jansenism. This hospital has a chapel and a nuns cloister which are all very well looked after.

Chinese hate baby girls

Would-be husbands in China might, in the next decade, tace serious problems as the population of girls is decreasing at an alarming rate due to the killing of baby girls and abortion of female foetuses according to Yancheng Evening News. There are five boys to every girl under the age of five in Ganxio

district "Because we call for one child only per family those who prefer boys to girls are having the sex of the child tested in advance and if it's a girl, having abortion," the report said Meanwhile a South China actor who drowned his fourth baby daughter be cause he wanted a son, has been imprisoned.



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WHENE THE



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A SPANSOR

OTHE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

eepak Parashar still believes that the greatest mistake he made in his career was when he called one of the female gossip columnists from one of the glossies that thrive on gossip and talked to her. Among the many things he talked about was the way the industry was treating him and the roles he was getting and how he was not very happy about working in what are called the B and C grade films. Then they talked about a subject which is more than just taboo in Indian societysex and homosexuality. "I don't know what I told her but what she went and wrote certainly gave me nightmares. People looked at me as if I was some strange specimen from the zoo. I received all kinds of angry letters and some of them also threatened me. And the worst thing happened was that the roles just stopped coming. That interview was a curse. I am not going to talk the way they want me to. I have decided not to get provoked come what may," says a disillusioned Deepak. No more mistakes for him. He has made enough of them.

Deepak: perturbed





Ranjeeta: alas!

[\frac{1}{no says Ranjeeta is a gonner? She is still very much around and she still has some very good roles which she says will prove that she is not a spent force. There was a time when filmmakers refused to take her seriously because they said she was a very difficult actress who specialised in creating problems for her producers. Then as if that was not enough, some interested parties circulated a rumour that Bobby (her pet name) was all set to marry Akbar Khan, her "boy friend" of more than six years' standing and give up her career as an actress. "I don't know how people can be so mean. Why are they so keen on throwing me out. I am not trying to create difficulties for others. Then why should they try to harm or hurt me anyway. I am happy with whatever is-happening to me. I have still got the kind of work that satisfies me and I don't have any great ambition. I just want to be known as a good actress before I decide to give up," says Ran-

uess what Javaprada's Gravourite hobby is: applying nail polish. At home or while on the sets, the star spends her free time manicuring her nails. She will apply one coat of polish, examine it and if found wanting will remove it and apply another shade. Finally after she completes her ritual, she will spread out her fingers and chuckle with pleasure and satisfaction.

Sangeetha wishes to set right the popular impression that she gives a lot of dance performances because she doesn't have many films in hand. She says indignantly that she loves to dance and pertorms only in her spare time. Critics as well as all others feel that her film career being what it is, it gives her a lot of spare time. Isn't it the same thing ultimately.

s president of the Telugu artistes association, Krishnam Raju takes himself very seriously. If any case of maltreatment of an artiste is brought to his notice, he views it sternly. He says this is his duty and he will continue to protect the interests of the artistes long after he ceases to be the president of the association.

Cridevi is slowly becoming a known figure among the Hindi cinegoers. She already has six Hindi films to her credit. But one striking peculiarity is that she has not stepped foot into Bombay for sheoting. So far all her Hindi films have been made in Madras. It is something like the mountain coming to Mohammad.

A runa's tantrums and irresponsible behaviour is now a thing of the past. She is now the epitome of cooperation. She is very careful about her dates, tries to be as accomodative as possible. She is so cooperative these days that she will willingly oblige to appear even in semi-nude scenes.

There are innumerable Rajnikanths in the Karnataka and Bangalore transport service. If one were to travel by bus in Karnataka, one would be astounded by the bus drivers and conductors. If they are young, they are sure to be imitators of Rajnikanth, who once was a bus conductor working for Bangalore transport service before fate catapulted him to stardom. Most of these drivers and conductors sport his hairstyle, copy his speech, gestures and mannerisms faithfully.



Rajnikanth: careerconscious

mbika has made a 🕰 reentry into Telugu films with G. Raminedu's Rajkumar in which she costars with Shobhan Babu and Jayasudha. After acting in seven Telugu films Ambika was missing from the Telugu filmworld for one whole year. Says an ecstatic Ambika, "The film is like a rebirth for me." She is thrilled about the fact that she will be co-staring with Shobhan for the first time. It is really astonishing but why do most young actresses seem to get a big thrill out of working with Shobhan Babu?

The Name to Watch.

A new trend in time

RICOH

MAPAN





Abha 107

ARIES (15 April—14 May)
This week your plans should be formulated carefully. Whether in business or in civil service do not take any basty decision and avoid any

take any hasty decision and avoid any kind of quarrel. This week does not look very favourable. Those employed might face problems from their superiors. Friends might deceive you, so be on your guard. Financially this week does not look bright.

Good dates: 10, 12 and 14 Lucky numbers: 3, 6 and 9.

Favourable direction: South

TAURUS (15 May—14 June)
The early part of the week will bring in financial gains through various means it is time for speculators and gamblers to look forward. For those employed, a promotion is likely. A good week for creative writers. Businessmen may embark on new ventures. Not a favourable week for romance. Marriages are best put off for a later date. Keep an eye on the health of an elderly member.

Good dates: 8, 10 and 11
Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 8
Favourable direction: North-east.

GEMINI (15 June—14 July)
Provided you rely on your intuitions this week you will fare well. Businessmen are advised to push their ven-

tures and projects to the utmost. Promotion is probable for those in government service. A share of good fortune is in store for you this week. Women are likely to receive presents of jewellery. There is a chance of inheriting property from a close relative.

Good dates: 9, 12 and 14 Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 5, Favourable direction: West

CANCER (15 July—14 August) This will be a very happy week provided you check your extravagant tendencies. Before making

any changes in your career do consult your elders or those above you. An unexpected journey at the end of the week will lead to financial losses. This week is particularly favourable for sportsmen, they will reach a new peak. A new friendship is in store for you.

Good dates. 8. 11 and 13. Lucky numbers: 3. 5 and 7. Favourable direction: North.

Pariste

LEO (15 August—14 September) A favourable week for creative artists. The time has come to display your talents. Success lies your

way Financially this week does not seem to be very lucky. Businessmen should avoid making new investments. Do not indulge in any kind of speculative venture. At home you will have to exercise tact and patience with the elders. An ideal time for romance.

Good dates: 12 13 and 14 . Lucky numbers: 1, 2 and 4 Favourable direction: South-west

VIRGO (15 September—14
October) This week business and pleasure should not be mingled together Keep your employers and

seniors in good humour. This period is not a good one for professionals avoid quarrelling with your colleagues. Deal patiently and sympathetically with the womenfolk at home. Those above 40 are advised to keep a vigilant eye on their health.

Good dates: 8, 9 and 13 Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 7 Favourable direction: East

LIBRA (15 October—14
November) If you do not take proper care of your health this week you are in for a total physical break-

down This phase is particularly favourable for intellectuals and creative artists. Disputes related to property and insurance will be solved this week. Those in love, this is a very favourable week for you. A journey at the end of the week will prove very helpful.

Good dates: 8, 9 and 10
Lucky numbers: 6, 8 and 9
Favourable direction. North-west

SCORPIO (15 November—14
December) Your boundless
energy and ambition will
reap ample reward this
week Those in civil ser-

vice. a promotion is likely and with it a change of residence Creative writers will be crowned with success. Make the most of your opportunities since this is a lucky week for you. Domestic life remains peaceful. For those yet to fall in love, romance enters your life this week.

Good dates: 10, 11 and 13 Lucky numbers, 4, 6 and 8, Favourable direction: East SAGITTARIUS (15 December—14 January) An excellent week for love and negotiations. All your impending problems will be

solved amicably. Professionals go shead confidently with all your projects Businessmen will be prosperous this week. Gain is indicated through speculative means. The domestic front remains peaceful, except for one dark spot: your health.

Good dates: 8. 10 and 17. Lucky numbers: 2. 5 and 7. Favourable direction: South-east.

CAPRICORN (15 January—14
February) Exercise tact and caution in all your dealings this week. Professionals should evoid heaty deci-

sions and quarrels, which might have adverse effects. This period is particularly favourable for those connected with fine arts. An elderly member might fall ill at home and you will have to be up on your toes the whole week. Avoid doubtful love adventures.

Good dates: 8, 12 and 14, Lucky numbers: 1 5 and 8, Favourable direction: West.

AQUARIUS 15 February 14
March 19 week begins
with one big snag. your
otherwise things will go

beyond your control Financially, this is a very favourable week. There are fair chances of inheriting property through a benefactor. Businessmen will remain busy the whole week making new investments. A word of advise do not neglect your near ones who will be a solace,

Good dates: 10 11 and 13. Lucky numbers: 3 5 and 6. Favourable direction: South.

PISCES (15 March—14 April)

An unexpected but pleasant surprise is presaged at the end of the week. This phase will be

full of activity. Businessmen should enter into new contracts, acquire new stocks and try to push up sales during this week investments made in the past will prove very helpful this week. Children at home will be a source of joy Courtship and marriages are well signified.

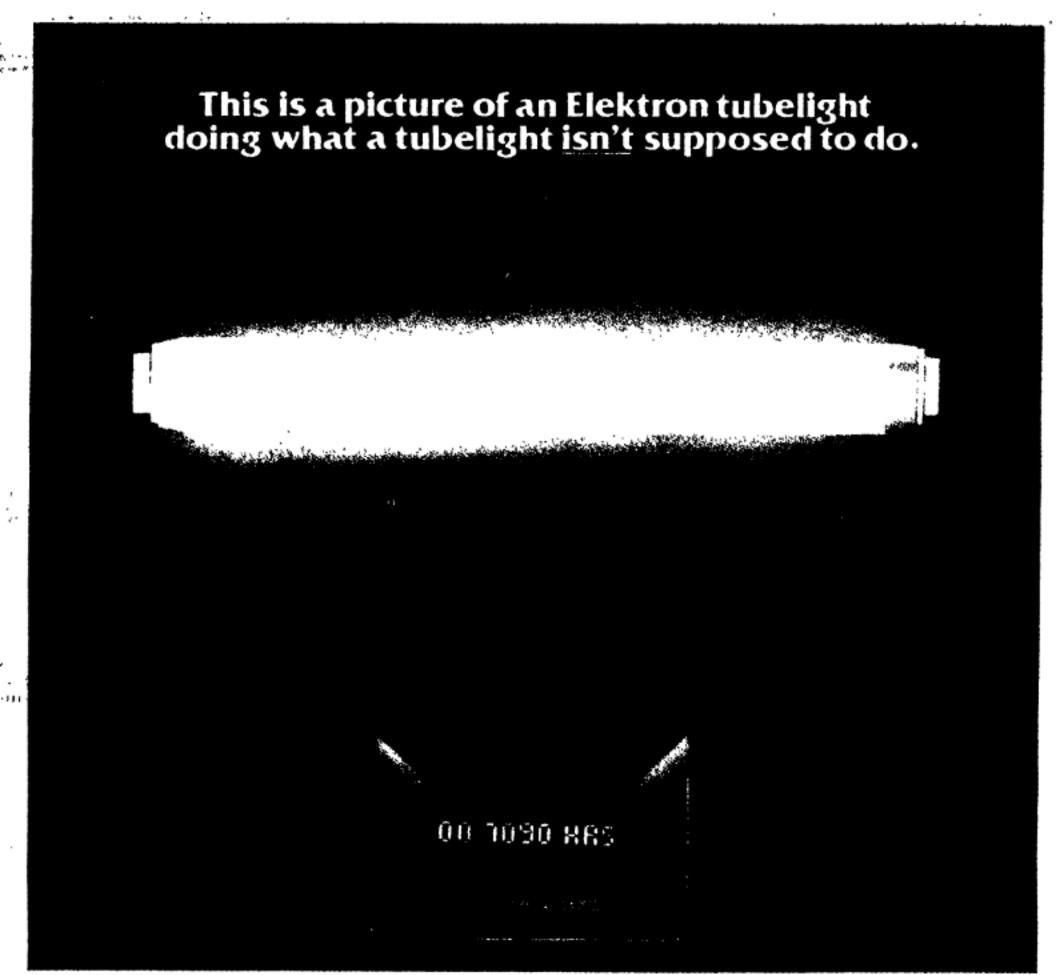
Good dates: 5. 11 and 14.

Lucky numbers: 5. 6 and 9.

Favourable direction: North-west

For those born on Fridays: You are generally very quiet softspoken and persevering by nature. Your diligence is appreciated by all and sundry. You are usually very religious-minded and love

to spend your leisure with saints and prophets. Women born on Fridays are mostly shy and reticent and also tend to feel very insecure. They have very few friends and acquaintances.



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Elektron. It will be worth watching closely in the future



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This India



BANGALORE: The government's accessibility to the public seems to have stretched a little too far Government files are accessible to monkeys these days. A passerby picked up a personal file of one B Basavaraj, chowkidar of the Central Silk Board, which he says he saw a monkey carry from the silk board building and gaily throw away on the road. The passerby brought the file to the Express office from where a silk board official collected it—Indian Express (Bhaskar Jana, Calcutta)

AJMER: More blood is sucked by bedbugs in hospitals than is available to blood banks in Rajasthan, a statisti cian has concluded after a night lone vigil at a medical college hospital. The statistician said that he saw 25 life crawling up a patient's bed, cach in sect consuming an estimated 0.05 mi pt blood. The 600-bed hospital had 500 patients and an equal number of staff members. The statistician calculated that bugs sucked 1200 ml or five. bottles of blood a day, making it 1.827 bottles per year. The average yearly availability of blood to the blood bank of the hospital was 2,000 bottles. He further estimated that over 15,000 bottles of blood was lost to bugs every year at the 190 state-run hospitals --Tribune (D. V. Joshi, Chandigarh)

KANPUR: A 90-year-old haji of Ghata pur tehsil has entered into wedlock for the eleventh time. This time his bride is 40-year-old Begum Nisha of Fatehpur district. The haji, Abdul Sattar Khan, is the father of two sons from his first wife and has a great many grand and great grand sons and daughters. His earlier wives have either died or are divorced—Indian Nation (Om Prakash Dangaich, Bhagalpur)

ETAWAH: Special rooms have been allotted for examinees appearing at the U.P. Board examinations at the Nehru Intermediate College centre in Auraiya for reasons best known to

invigilators. Even the police personnel on duty are said, to be helping the examinees. The peons at the gate carry, the answers to the examinees and they are paid from Rs 10 to Rs 25 for their service. Students in the privileged rooms are required to pay a sum of Rs 500- Pronect (Vijaya Nand, Lucknow)

NEW DELHI! There were fishy exchanges in the Lok Sabha when deputy speaker G. Laksmanan wanted to know if fish eating came under vegetarianism of non-vegetarianism Annels! laughter, the minister of state tor agraculture. Mr Yogendra Makwana remarked that Mr Laksmanan could himself provide the answer. The most searching query, however, came from Dr. Subramaniam Swainy: "Is US presence in Diego Garcia responsible for decline in fish population in the Indian Ocean?" The exchanges took place when the minister in charge of the fishery department was replying to questions on fisheries development in the country -Indian Express (Siyatha S. C., Cahcut)

MANGALORE The VIPs are posing a problem by being choosy about their seats in luxury coaches operating be tween Mangalore and Bangalore According to a spokesman of the trans port corporation, live seats up to number ten are reserved for the MLAs. It appears that they are all keen on seat number seven. It so happened recently that this particular seat was allotted to the BTP MUADrAS Acharva After eccapying the seat at Udupi, Dr. Acharya got down for a chat with his trained I me the opportunity. Mr. Vasinas, Sidiet Conjusselis MLA. rumped over the ear. When Dr. Adenis a criema li bas acat. Mr. Salian and their read a pared that particular SC:11 Inst: in Lyptess (N Partha anath - Bananige

MCW DI LHI. The additional session judge, Mr B. Chandhory acquitted Satva Singh who had been sentenced to one year's rizorous imprisonment and a tine of R. 1.000 for outraging the modesty of a girl by kissing her. He had been held girlly and sentenced by additional chief metropolitan magis trate in January 1983 for forcibly kissing Miss Vingala, a teenage employee at his wite's factory—Hindustan Times (Alokesh Sikdar, New Delhi)

NEW DELHI Hundreds of class four employees staged a strange kachcha march by parading in underpants from Boat club to the residence of the union home minister. Mr P C Sethi. They were demanding terricot summer uniforms instead of khadi Mr Sethi was visibly moved when a deputation of the marchers clad in underpants called on him. He as aired than that he would take up the matter with the finance ministry. Nacpua Times (A. K. Guha, Wadki)

Without Comment

A saint should rule the state. The people should feel that their leader is not attracted by worldly things—N.T.Rama Rao after becoming a sanyasi

I shan't be able to ring you about the article-isn't our phone system terrible? They call it cross bar. I think they mean' cross wire—indira Gandhi to the Daily I spress interviewer.



Why cannot he (defence minister Mr Venkataraman) quietly retire, tend to flowers, road or write books, fondle his loving grand-children? Whyshing he be a part of the lying and stealing and the rest of the shenanigans which define New Delhi?— Ashok Mittalia The Telegraph

that the understand where our country is going. I feel that the cult of the nation is being crushed—Chandra Shekhar after his padayatra reached Bombas

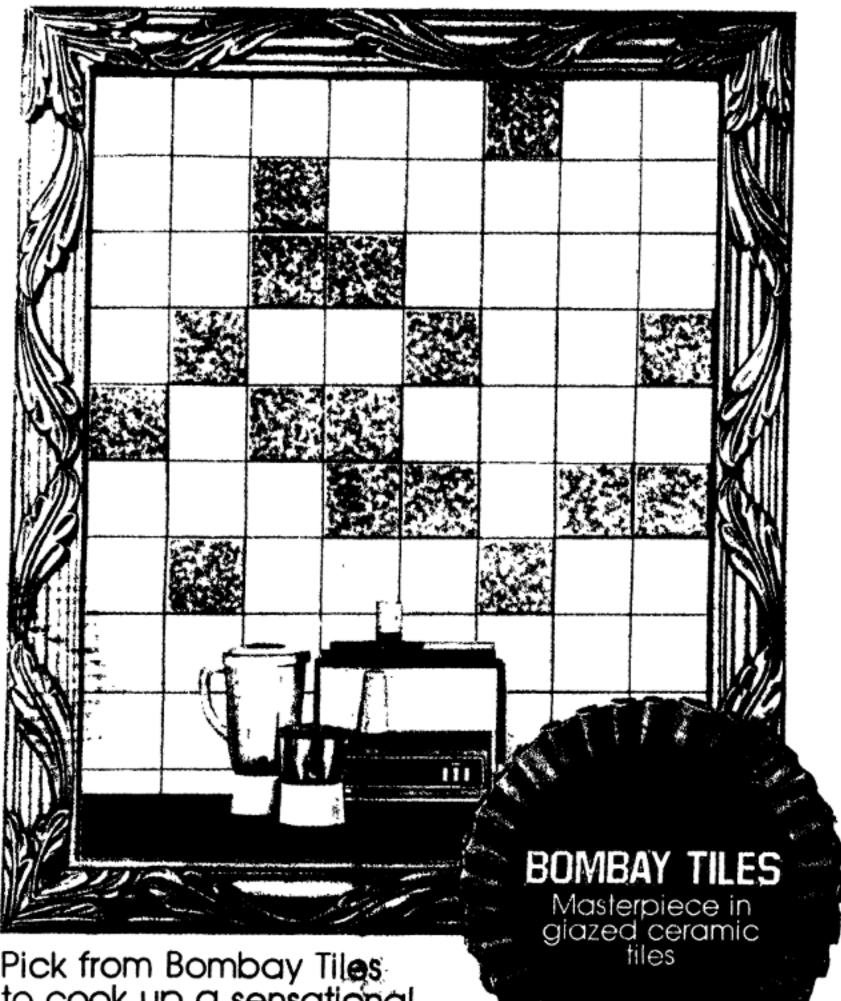
this like being showered by bullets. You're pleased that the first three shots miss you, but you could always be hit by the fourth—Lariq al Muayyed, Bahrani's information minister on the danger posed by the oil slick, in Vewsweek

A bottle of scotch (adulterated) and a gold watch (smuggled) are usually enough to "buy" a reporter who will happily, if somewhat inebriatedly plant stories...

— Minhaz Merchant in Businessworld

I had to create a wardrobe of the poor, to give clothes a look of poverty. For me it was a rediscovery of simplicity—Bhanu Athaiya, the first Indian to win an Oscar award, on how she designed the costumes for the lahanwala Bagh massacre scene in Gandhi, quoted in Indian Express.

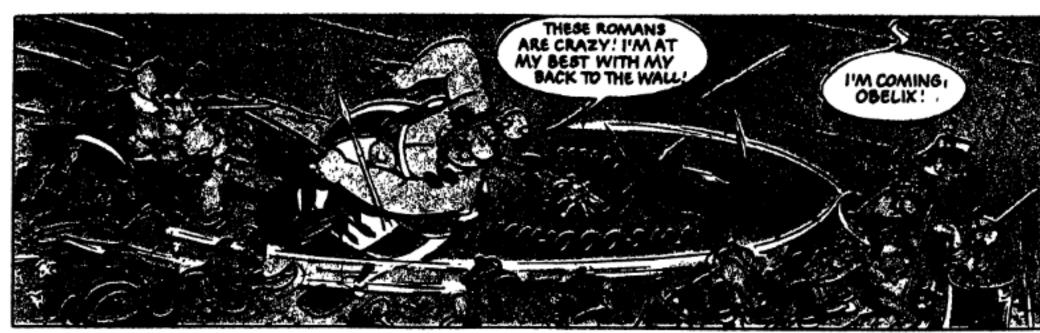
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Chess

Liu (Black) to move



Gheorghiu (White)

At the 1980 Malta Olympiad, the People's Republic of China confirmed its arrival on

the international chass scene with some spectacular successes. Two years later in Lucerne the Chinese had collectively perhaps not quite made the strides one might have hoped for, but their individual talents

were still very obvious.

To us poor Europeans everything oriental is shrouded in clouds of mystique, not least the way they play chess. Their ideas display some intangible freshness and originality of thought, a sort of Mandarin je ne sais quoi. Certainly Romanian grandmaster Florian Gheorghiu did not know something in the following game. One moment he was confidently explaining how everything was under control, the next he had egg foo yong all over his face.

White: Gheorghiu. Black: Liu Modern Benoni Defence

Lucerne 1982

1 P-Q4 N-KB3 P-QB4 P-B4 3 P-Q5 N-QB3PxP P-K3 P-03 P-KN3 5 PxP N-B3 N-Q2 QN-Q2 8 P-K4 B-K2 O-O 10 0-0 R-K1 11 P-QR4 N-Ř4 P-QR3 12 R-K1 13 P-B4?!

which till now has been very conservative.

13 . . . N(4)-N5 14 B-B3 P-KR41 Proparing a sacrifice of the king's knight followed by . . . B-Q5+. 15 N-B4 NxKPI 16 RxN B-Q5+ 17 RxB One of the points of 14 . . . P-KR4 is revealed in the variation 17 K-B1 NxP+ 18 K-K2 BxN 19 PxB NxB and if 20 KxN B-N5+ (or 20 PxN RxR+ 21 PxR B-N5+) PxR 18 N-K4 Q-R5 19 N(B4)xP Not a happy choice, but neither is 19 P-R3 P-841 19 20 K-81 B-84 22 N-82 P-Q6!! OxP+ 21 NxB PxN A further sacrifice full of oriental mystery.

Not really in keeping with his build-up,

24 QxP DIAGRAM The move of a thoroughly bemused Romanian.

24 . . Q-N8+!! and mate next move.

Threatening . . . P-R6

23 Oxp P--R5

MICHAEL STEAN

There were many good hands in the Bulletin of the Olympiad at Biarritz, but I didn't see this one, which is reported in the French magazine

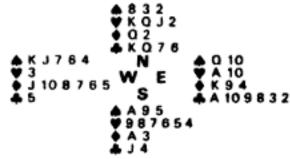
The bidding is not recorded, but it might have been.

> SOUTH NORTH 1. 2. 3♥ Νo

West leads his singleton club East wins with the Ace and returns the 8, on which South plays the Jack Partner's 8 appears to be a middle card, not inviting specifically a spade or a diamond. The question is, how should West play after ruffing the club

The Jack of diamonds may seem the obvious card, but this will hardly lead to the

five tricks needed to beat the contract. When you have made up your mind, look at the full deal:



If West leads a diamond at trick 3 South will force out the Ace of hearts and discard two losers on 🚓 K Q; and if West leads a low spade, declarer will win the second round and still make the contract According to the report, Michel Corn made the fine play of the Jack of spades Now the declarer is lost. If he wins he runs into a spade ruff, and if he ducks then West will switch to the Jack of diamonds.

Some people always like to find something different, and the French international, Dominique Poubeau, pointed out that the King of spades at trick three would also defeat the contract always supposing that East dropped the Queen!

Stamp



Very few countries bother to make their fiscal, or revenue raising, stamps attractive Tasmania, on the other hand, obviously believes in giving its taxpayers some aesthetic consolation for their pains. The Tasmanian tiger, or thylacine (above), the platypus and a hydro-electric power pylon are featured on recent revenue stamps.

TERENCE REESE

10 Who is an ocularist?

11 What is the first part of the Talmud called?

12 The film Gandhi is dedicated to a clerk in the Indian High Commission in London What is his name?

13 Who was Thomas Becket?

What important event took place in the year 80 A.D?

C. W. HILL

The writers of the first three Gospels in Cheti Chand.

> 7. Hojo, Mandrake's cook. voice to oracies.

tess, Pythia, took over the task of giving boy Apollo slew Python and his prieswho controlled the oracle at Delphi. The She was the dragon of Mt. Parnassus mark that he seemed to be getting better. 1been's retort on hearing his wife's re-5. The Norwegian playwilght, Henrik

from silence to full volume. from darkness to full visibility or of sound 4. It is the gradual emergence of a picture

3. John Le Carre. 2. Scotland Yard.

Valentino.

deed, like Elvis Presiey or Rudolph prominent people or film stars who are it is a person who is obsessed with

VH2MEH2

QUIZ

Who is a necromaniac?

If you were sending a telegram phrased "Handcuffs," where would you be sending it?

David Cornwell is the real name of an American novelist who is better known by his pseudonym. What is it?

4. What is a fade-in?

5. Whose last words were: "Not at all!"?

6. In Greek mythology, who was Python?

In Mandrake (the Magician) comics, who is the chief of Inter-Intel (the worldwide police organisation)?

8. What is the Sindhi New Year called?

9. Who are the Synoptists?

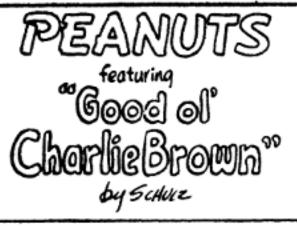
Home (Flavian ampitheatre). Vespasian, completed the Colloseum of 14. The Roman emperor, Titus, son of

The sound of the second of the 13. He was the Archbishop of Canter-

12. Motifal Kothari. BIT. Mishna.

He is a maker of artificial eyes. mon non.

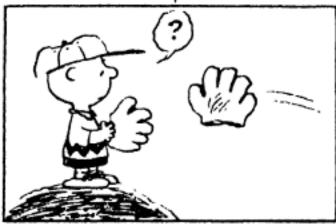
whose narratives agree. All three differ the Bible-Matthew, Mark and Luke-



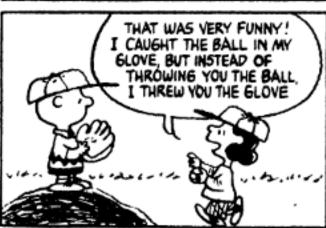










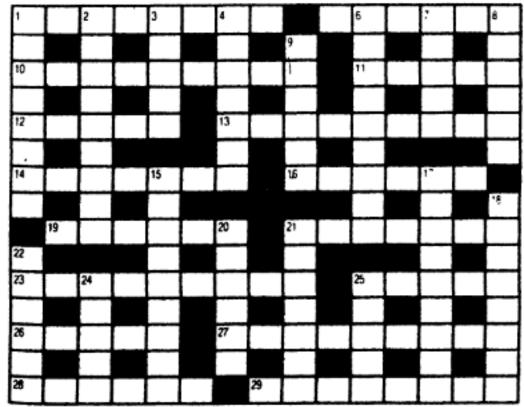






Sunday crossword

No. 3



ACROSS:

- 1 Emil gets involved with cars and produces marvels! (8)
- 5 Stiffened—in a grammatical manner? (6)
- 10 These dishes certainly sound tasty, if not sweet (9)
- 11. Part of the dog restrains these monsters. (5)
- 12. But these dances are not just for the inebriated (5)
- 13. This disease is definitely to be avoided (3, 6)
- 14. A stick, little Edward—provided an assisting body. (7)
- 16. Stockings, did you hear? No. cutters (6)
- Affirmatives follow the donkey, in attempts. (6)
 Boa pelt in a mess—but it's drinkable! (7)

- 23 Bang chin right? Unfortunately, it's spreading (9)
- 25 A boat finds nothing in acne, unhappily (5)
- 26 Onassis follows the ancient city to discover the plant (5)
- 27 Sure, moult badly--and end up quivering. (9)
- 28 One in three turns out one of two (6)
- 29 Arose from a tumultuous scene, Dad (8)

DOWN:

- 1 Shakespeare's had eyes "nothing like the sun" (8)
- 2 Lies waver uncertainty in disclosing critiques. (9)
- 3 They are supposed to help you, now (5)
 4 Expelled—for ruinous vice. Ted (7)
- effect (9)
- 7 Quiet! Before the mat, an indifferent gesture (5)
- 8 Scatter-sounds like removal of magic formula! (6)
- 9 Stares oddly for these flowers (6)

Gangster's girl, that is, involved with ten-strangely, has a softening

- Male possessive in European country gets right to vote (9)
 Bird cover in Sherwood Forest? (5, 4)
- 18 Turned around—wrote poetry again, it seems (8)
- 20 Avoids while wearing these garments, apparently (6)
- 21 Sty inhabitant rents? Only for it's litter (7)
- 22 Tube so strange, it's dull-witted (6)
- 24 Small apartment encloses rising sun-god to get distant. (5)
- 25 A hundred without manners? How unrefined (5)

Solutions to SUNDAY Crossword No. 2

Acress

1 A stitch in time 9 Acrylic 10, Icerink 11 Ernes 12 Insistent 13, Droop 15 Cockroach 17 Responses 18 Ranks 19 Abattors 22, Milky 23, Evocate 24 Proviso 25 Intermarnage

Down

2 Strenuous 3 Isles 4 Cacti 5 Treasures 6. Maize 7 Lavender water 8 Sketches by Boz 10 Insects 14 Prostrate 15 Castile 16 Annuiling 20. Acom 21 Supper 22 Maori

Compiled by Rita Tewari

THE LAST CONGRESSMAN?



Charan Singh: needing an ally

THE former Prime Minister, Chaudhury Charan Singh, has suddenly started reminding the politicians he meets that he is the only Congressman alive today. The Chaudhury was indeed in the Congress for around four decades, before he parted company in 1967. Now with the opposition unity moves opening a new chapter almost every day, the compulsions of such an unity have made Chaudhury Charan Singh give up his virulent anti-Congress stance, which he had adopted after 1967. The unity efforts of the Janata Party president, Mr Chandra Shekhar, have led to a parallel unity move, in which, apart from the Chaudhury, Babu Jagjivan Ram, H. N. Bahuguna, Ratubhai Adani and Sharad Pawar are trying to re-establish the "Congress of 1967." (On the eve of the 1967 general election, there was a nationwide exodus from the Indian National Congress and in many states, the former Congressmen, under the banners of "Jana Congress," "Bangla Congress," etc., became partners in the non-Congress governments which were formed in nine states. The splits of 1969 and

1978 followed. Now the effort is to revive the organisation at the 1967 level-which would thus bring people like Chaudhury Charan Singh into the limelight.) The Chaudhury has reminded both Babu Jagjivan Ram and Mr Bahuguna recently that he has spent more years in the Congress than any other politician alive today. Why this sudden change of heart? The reason is that the Chaudhury has decided that his one-time adversary, Babuji, is needed by him as an ally for the next general elections. And Babuji has been insisting that if a new party be launched, then the word "Congress" must be a part of its name. (The two names which are being discussed, incidentally, are the Lok Socialist Congress and the Jana Socialist Congress.) The unity move between the Congress(S), the Democratic Socialist Party and the Rashtriya Congress (of Gujarat) has provided the basic meeting point for the formation of this "alternate Congress party." While the Janata Party president, Mr Chandra Shekhar, a former Congress leader himself, would rather have all these elements merge into the Janata Party, the parallel unity move seems to be aimed at the formation of a new "Congress" and ultimate unity with other opposition parties. Interestingly, for those who are keen to keep the Congress history alive, two anniversaries are round the corner, which can be utilised for the pan-Congress unity efforts (bringing together of Congressmen scattered in many parties, including the ruling party): 1984 is the golden jubilee year of the formation of the Congress Socialist Party (the 'Ginger Group' which functioned within the Indian National Congress) and 1985 is the centenary year of the Indian National Congress. Will a viable "Congress alternative" emerge before these two events? Efforts seem to be directed in that direction.

NTR'S OPERATION CLEAN-UP



NTR: acting clean

PILGRIMS returning from Tirupati these days are not only full of stories about the greatness of the lord, but also of the Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Mr N.T. RamaRao.NTR, who was elected to the Assembly from the Tirupati constituency, has changed the holy town. Not only has the pilgrim centre become cleaner, the Tirupati-Tirumala Devashthanam Trust (TTDT), which had become a wellknown centre of corruption over the years, has also received a facelift. Around a thousand functionaries of the TTDT have either been transferred or are under suspension, pending enquiry. Getting a "darshan" does not involve paying bribes to TTDT officials any more. In another move, the sweepers of the town were summoned by NTR one day and firmly told that the place belonged to "nobody's father, but to the lord." So, unless cleanliness was maintained, the chief minister threatened dire action. And the town soon acquired its new look. With this transformation of Tirupati town, NTR is now slowly becoming a household name not only in Andhra Pradesh but also in southern India.

TAILPIECE: ON 15 April, New Delhi had a deluge. It seemed as if the skies were weeping. The city has never witnessed such rains even during the monsoons. Many streets were flooded. By some coincidence, the same day, in London, the daughter of the architect of the capital, Sir Edwin Lutyens, Ms Elizabeth Lutyens, died at the age of 76. New Delhi is a city which has no memorial dedicated to its creator. But on this day, the entire city seemed to have wept.

D.E. NIZAMUDDIN

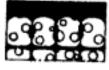
DIRECT ACTION DAY

REMEMBER "Project Ten"? A few weeks ago, in this column, we had referred to this fund collection drive of a certain political party, which had been code-named Project Ten. The project was aimed at collecting party funds with the target of Rs 750 crores in 75 days. There is some more news on Project Ten. The project's exponents are keeping their fingers crossed for a particular Tuesday in May. Someone has told the partymen that 23

May may be a good date for decisive political action. If this advice is accepted, then in late June or early July, there may be hectic political activity in every nook and corner of the country. The weather will not permit mass participation, did you say? Well, in Assam, democracy has "survived" without the people showing, much enthusiasm in the elections. And the exponents of Project Ten seem to prefer such norms.



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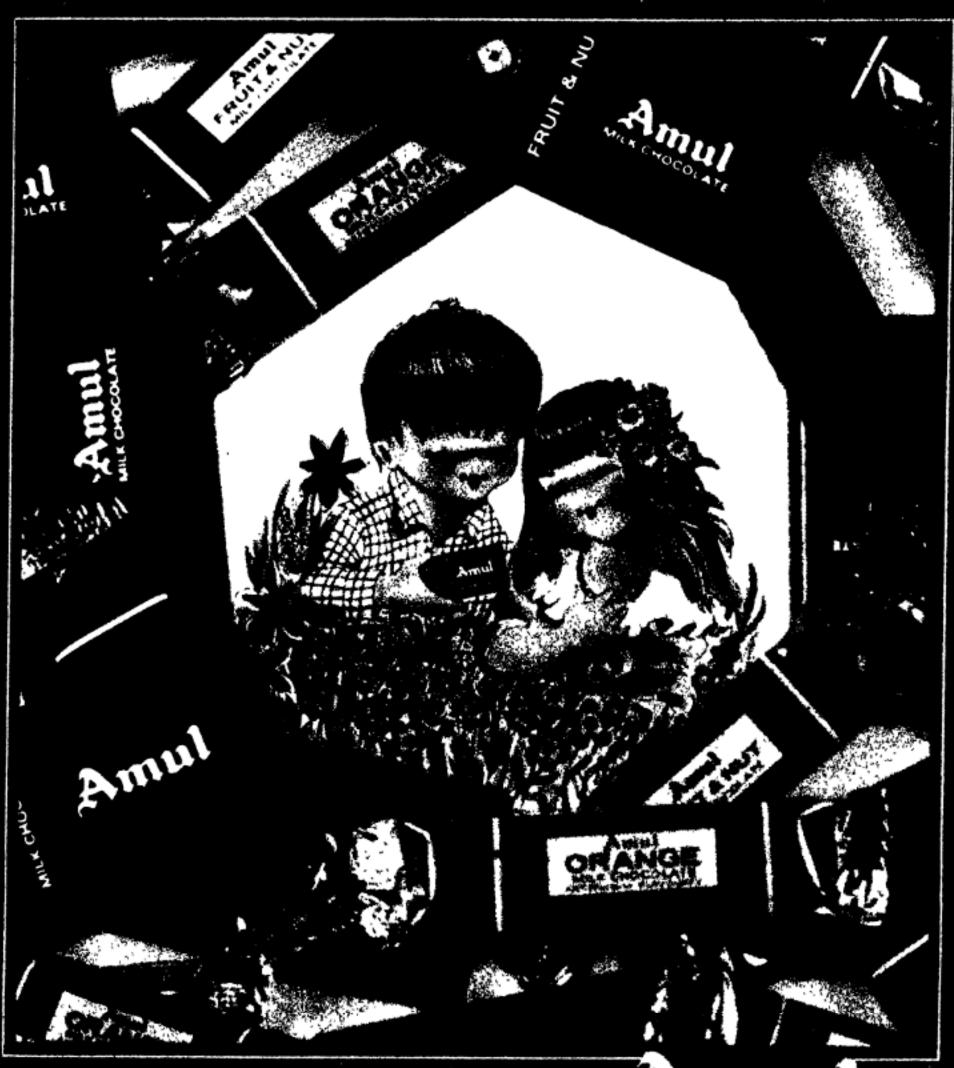
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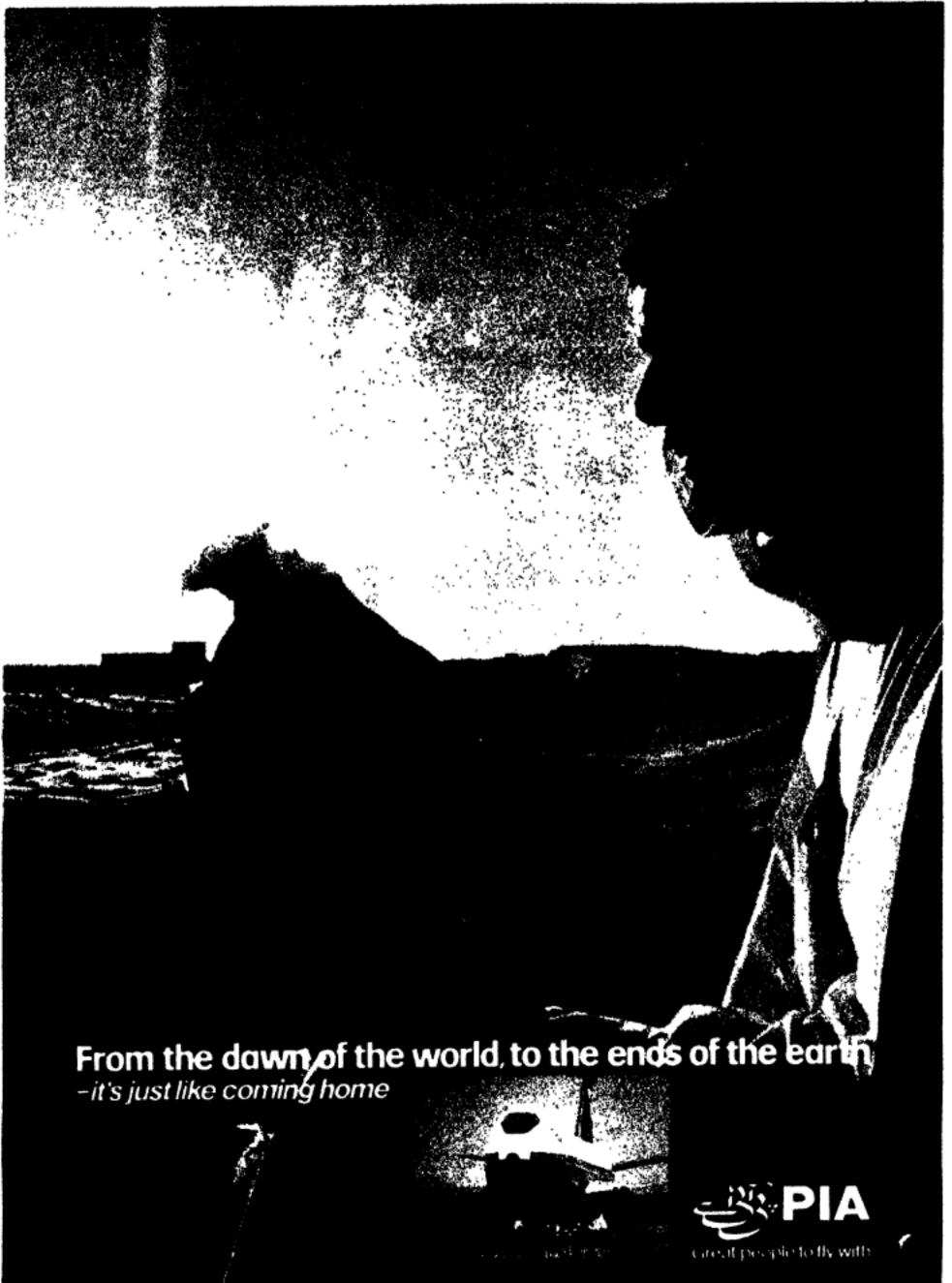
The Government of Karnataka recognised in Mysore Sales International, a marketing force of proven credentials. The Company was given the task of producing and distributing subsidised note-books. These note-books were christened with a brand name—Lekhak. As the first precautionary step to prevent misuse. The next step was to organise effective distribution to schools and colleges. The note-books gained whole-hearted acceptance and popularity amongst the student community.

In addition, its new range of Lekhak products like pencils, ball and fountain pens, gum, colour pencils and a host of other stationery items continue to be sold through the Company's already established outlets. Not only is the student community benefited by MSIL's efforts, but also entrepreneurs who have set up small industries for the manufacture of these products.

All this has been largely due to MSIL's involvement and interest in the student community. This involvement has also resulted in the yearly 'Student of the Year Contest' and educational audio-visual programmes, conducted by MSIL.

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SUNDAY VOLUME 10 ISSUE 43 RS 2.50 AN ANANDA

VOLUME 10 ISSUE 43 RS 2.50 AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

15—21 May 1983



Time is running out in the sensitive state of Punjab: violence is escalating while a solution to the problems of this state remains distant. For how long will this senseless violence continue? What needs to be done to return peace to this trouble-torn state? Tayleen Singh visited Punjab to report. Plus, exclusive interviews with Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, Balbir Singh Sandhu and Harchand Singh Longowal.

Delhi's most in-demand astropalmist, Ramakrishna Sarathy, who has a formidable record of correct predictions to his credit, one of them being the election of Bob Hawke as the Prime Minister of Australia, predicts the futures of some of the most important political personalities in the world today.

Page 44



The beheading of two members of the All India Revolutionary Forward Bloc, including its chairman in Gaya, close on the heels of the brutal murder of the district magistrate of Gopalgunj, has opened a fresh chapter of violence and lawlessness in Bihar. Niraj Roy reports on the gruesome killings and the events leading up to them.

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Cover transparency of Akali agitators
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by Sondeep

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2500 years ago, an ex-slave called Aesop regaled the court of Croesus (in Asia Minor) with his animal fables.

Ironically, his charming tale of the hare and the tortoise seems to reflect the present state of our transportation today.

Ironical, because 'slow and steady' has become irrelevant—the emphasis having shifted to speed (and therefore time) and economy.

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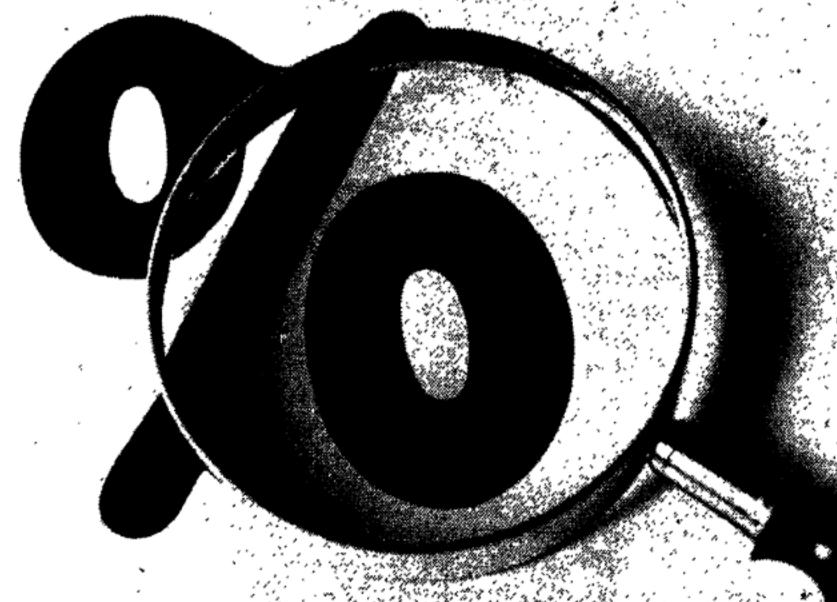
Inputs which will increase the pace of modernisation in this vital sector.

And banish the lumbering tortoise and slumbering hare to the pages of antiquity.



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Sophisticated brigandage

ore than a quarter century ago I was commissioned to do a biography of the late Sir Shri Ram. I found out about his humble origins: he belonged to an obscure Aggarwal-bania family from Jhajjar which migrated to Delhi and lived in a small haveli in Bazar Sita Ram. Shri Ram passed his matriculation with a third division; his father did not think it wise to squander money on further education. For some years Shri Ram worked as clerk, then as an assistant accountant in the Delhi Cloth Mills, a modest sized spinning and weaving mill not doing too well. Young Shri Ram walked from his haveli to distant Subzi Mandi. He spent less time on his bahikhatas and more talking to millhands discussing their problems. On his way back home he stopped at every cloth-shop to ask the owner what he thought of DCM products. When asked who he was, he introduced himself as "aap ka gharib *julahaa* (your humble weaver.") Shri Ram was the real builder of the industrial house which his two sons, Bharat Ram and Charat Ram, expanded into a veritable empire. Shri Ram was averse to having anything written about him. When broached on the subject he dismissed it with a quotation from Kabir: "Ek Sees ka maanwa, karta bahutak hees;

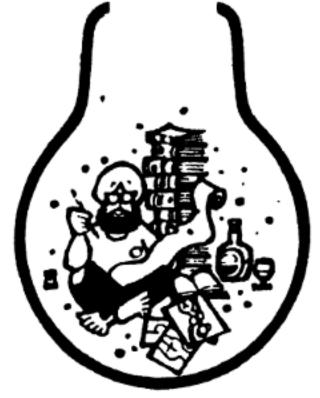
Lankapati Raawan gaya, bees bhu-

ja dus sees.

(Man who has only one head is full of pride. He knows not that Raawan, the Lord of Lanka, who had ten heads and 20 hands was forced to quit the world.)"

The Nandas came out as refugees from Pakistan in 1947. They began their new life with a permit to ply two buses in Delhi. From that they built up their industrial complex that goes under the name Escorts.

When our government launched on the scheme to allow non-resident Indians to invest money in Indian enterprises the motive presumably was to earn foreign exchange and at the same time build up new enterprises or restore sick companies to health. It was not intended to let them play crows and cranes with stocks and shares, nor surreptitiously gain control of prosperous concerns. One may question the tradition whereby members of a family appoint their own kith and kin in managerial positions in companies where public investments are much higher than their holdings, but there can be no justifica-



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

tion whatsoever for people who had nothing whatsoever to do in building a particular industry from scratch (as did the Shri Rams and the Nandas) from grabbing them. This would amount to sophisticated brigandage. And this is precisely what Swraj Paul, an incorrigible name-dropper and one of a family of parvenus owning a small-time business house (once black-listed but now come into big money) is trying to do. Another achievement to Swraj Paul's credit is that despite holding a British passport he acts as if he was the unofficial ambassador of India in London. What one can get away with if one knows the right people boggles the imagination.

Indodoo

If reports that dung of herbivores is being offered for sale in America's fanciest department store, Bloomingdales, for the dollar equivalent of Rs 25 a kilo are correct, India has a great opportunity of earning billions of dollars worth of foreign exchange. Hitherto American entrepreneurs who have launched on the animal excreta business have only tapped raw material available in American zoos: hence the product has been patented under the trade name Zoodoo. Zoos have a very limited stock of elephants, camels, zebras, rhinos, bison and deer. We not only have all these animals but also wild asses and countless number of buffaloes and cows whose droppings we burn away in our choolhas. As we increase our production of oil

and electricity we could export our animal dung to the United States. Most of all we should mobilise our human resources: more than half of our population of 700 million people are herbivorous (the Indianism is pure vegetarian) and like other animals of the species capable of producing larger quantities of turo than the fish-egg-meat eating hu man varieties. If you don't believe me ask any of your friends in the defence services. Our perceptive British rulers had laid down exact sizes of pans to be installed in soldiers' latrines. Those meant for Tommies were half the size designed for our jawans. The Tommy got the calories he needed from a few strips of meat; the jawan, particularly if he was vegetarian had to consume a mound of rice or a stack of chapattis to imbibe the same number of calories and was hence able to produce considerably more waste matter. Now this need no longer be considered a waste.

The first thing to do would be to hire a good advertising agency and mount a publicity campaign in the United States with some appropriate slogan like "Indodoo is better than Zoodoo ... " Perhaps the Indian Standards Institution (ISI) could lay down necessary specifications to ensure the product is of vegetarian bowels and the State Trading Corporation (STC) could carry out sample tests to guarantee its genuineness. Now that we have pretty well exhausted the dollar-earning capacity of Indian spiritualism and our holy men have run out of gas we could turn to offering Americans something of material worth. They may initially smell Indian propaganda in our produce but when they find it yields better fruit, vegetables and flowers they will in time discover its fragrant qualities

Tandoori English

A Punjabi peasant settled in England became a very popular figure in his locality. But he failed to pick up more than a few necessary words of the English language. His English friends decided to help him out of his difficulties and on his birthday presented him with a parrot which spoke English fluently. "You will love it," they assured him.

After a week, the friends met him in the local pub and asked him, "Old boy, how did you like the parrot we gave you?"

The Punjabi mustered all the English at his command and replied: "Bhairee good, Bhairee, bhairee good. Tase like Tandoori chicken.

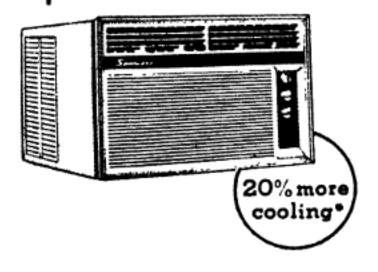




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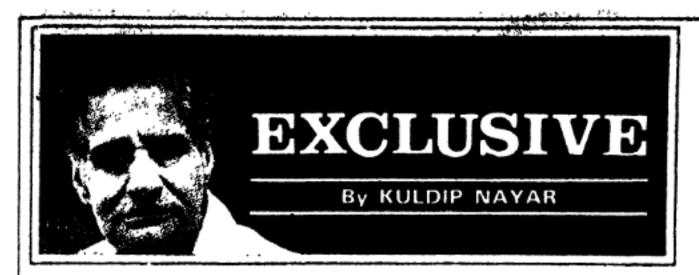
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1



The Golden Temple should not be misused

•hen I was in the Golden Temple nearly seven months ago, the place was crowded and in the grip of much excitement. The Akalı agitation was then on and till then nearly 70,000 men and women had gone to tail. When I visted Amritsar again at the end of April, I found far fewer people in the temple, with a marked drop even in the number of devotees going for darshan, and there was palpable tension. For in the temple was believed to be at least one criminal, the killer of Avtar Singh Atwal, the Punjab police DIG.

The murderer's presence is not admitted by those who now rule the temple. When I asked Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, the Akali chief, whether the assailant could have found shelter in the temple, he would only say that he could not be certain because there were at least 20,000 people visiting the temple every day. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the extremists' leader, would not give a direct reply he told me that he had condemned the murder because it had taken place within the precincts of the temple.

But there were several people, who did not want to disclose their identities, who told me that the murderer was very much in the temple. One said that soon after the murder there was a beat of drums to announce that entrances to the temple were sealed. Atwal was shot dead at the main entrance of the temple, where there are many shops and scores of people must have seen the killing. And the only lane which the murderer could have taken opens into the temple; any other would have brought him to the crossing where there was a posse of policemen.

Atwal had gone to the temple as a

worshipper and not as a police official and that a worshipper's blood should have been spilt in the temple is sheer sacrilege. But whatever the Akali leaders may say in condemnation of this there is no one courageous enough to surrender the criminal. "What will you do if the police were to enter the Golden Temple?" I asked Sant Longowal. His reply was, "I shall lead a peaceful procession of hundreds of Sikhs to bar their entry and the police would have to kill me and others before going further." Sant Bhindranwale did not even use the word "peaceful." He said, "We shall give the police a befitting reply." He may even be hoping that the police would make the attempt. In a speech quoted by a Punjab daily of Jullundur, he said that the day the police entered the Golden Temple, the foundation of Khalistan would be laid.

My feeling is that the government would be making a Himalayan blunder if police were to be sent inside the temple. (President Zail Singh is strongly opposed to police entry into the temple and has even threatened to resign if such a step is taken.) True, the temple should not be allowed to

What is evident is the estrangement that has developed between the Hindus and the Sikhs in Punjab. They have stopped discussing politics with each other because every debate ends in bitterness.

become the refuge of criminals. And by protecting them or conniving with them, the people who manage the temple are responsible for violating the sanctity of the temple. But the only way the government should act in such cases is to build up public opinion against such misuse of places of worship. Already there are many devout Sikhs against at the happenings in their most sacred temple. But even they would oppose any police foray into the temple.

It is tragic that New Delhi's procrastination should have caused the moderate section of the Akali leadership to be pushed into the background, allowing the extremists to call the tune. When at the end of 10 months of peaceful agitation the moderates could not show any result, the gain of the extremists is understandable. Now a person like Sant Bhindranwale is able to say that he had allowed himself to be led by moderates and had seen that they could achieve nothing, and that now it was time that they followed him to see what he could

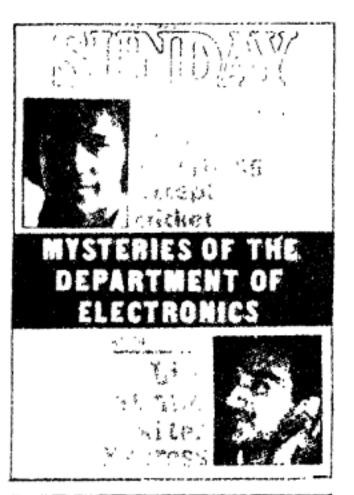
achieve.

I asked Bhindranwale what he had gained from the 10-month-old agitation. He said he wanted the Sikhs to be united and to get the feeling of being "enslaved." "I have succeeded in both," he said. I do not know to what extent, but there is no doubt that a sense of grievance has united the Sikhs and except for a very small minority they have developed a feeling of suffering injustice, not only in Punjab but throughout the country.

There are vague claims, no doubt, which cannot be tested, and it is hard to believe that Sikhs "throughout the country" who are doing so well in all walks of life should find any reason to feel aggrieved on religious grounds.

But what is evident is the estrangement that nas developed between Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab. They have stopped discussing politics with each other because every debate ends in bitterness. These two communities, which are bound to one another by birth and marriage—practically all families have both Hindus and Sikhs as their members—have gone so apart that even in clubs and in the courts of law Hindus sit in one corner and Sikhs in another.

No doubt, in the marketplace life appears to be normal, though business is slack, and Hindus and Sikhs behave as if nothing is wrong. For example the Hall bazar, the main artery connecting the Golden Temple with the rest of the city, was bustling with Hindus and Sikhs when I passed through it the other day. Still, all over Punjab you can feel the tension, hidden fears, and hints of evil things to come.



An eye-opener

ongratulations to Sunday for unravelling the Mysteries of the department of Electronics (17 April). I hope that the article will serve as an eye-opener and Mrs Gandhi will take immediate steps to remove corrupt people from this prestigious department. Tapan Ganguli, Tezpur

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya did a wonderful job by unearthing the corruption in the Department of Electro-

nics (DoE).

The dramatic post-war developments in electronics proved to be even more revolutionary in their effects on our lives than all previous inventions such as the steam engine, the internal combustion engine, electricity and many others. Under the present circumstances it is imperative that encouragement be given to the development of electronics in India. The DoE has a vital role to play in this issue, but a few corrupt officials are ruining the prospects of electronics development in our country. A thorough probe must be ordered and the guilty brought to book. Saugata Bhattacharya, Kharagpur

I was shocked to read about the corruption in the department of electronics. SUNDAY did a brilliant job by highlighting such corruption in the highest echelons of the government.

Shankerlal Lahoti, Gulbarga

It is hardly surprising that corruption should exist even in the prestigious department of electronics considering the state of the country today. With corrupt politicians ruling the country, who have to constantly make compromises in order to stay in power, what can one expect from bureaucrats, who largely follow the politicians' instruc tions?

P. Roychowdhury, Calcutta

Tilted gossip

ongratulations to Sunday for bringing out Khushwant Singh's column regularly. His Gossip sweet and sour (10 April) made interesting reading. Jeelani Qureshi, Srinagar

One of the reasons why Khushwant Singh does not see a Muslim in a Hindu or a Sikh shrine is because Islam teaches mankind to surrender before an invisible God and prohibits a man from indulging in idol-worship.

Restrictions on entries to temples are another reason why a Muslim or a Dalit is not seen in a Hindu temple. This is not the case with Muslim shrines. At Ajmer Shareef, for instance, any one, irrespective of his religion, caste or creed, is welcome. Baba Farid Ganj Shakkar is a Sufi saint, but equally revered by Sikhs and Muslims Abdul Qasem, Calcutta

Mausoleums of Sufi saints are not places of worship, and it is a mistake on Mr Singh's part to compare them with temples or gurudwaras. Muslim Sufi saints were secular in their outlook and had mass appeal. It is indeed a sorry state of affairs that even their mausoleums have become targets of communal riots.

Saleem Sultan Siddiqui, Aligarh

The very idea of equating a dargah with a temple, mosque or gurudwara is erroneous. While the former is merely a tomb of a sufi saintor/aulia, the latter are regarded as the very abode of God, the almighty. It is doubtful if a non-Muslim has ever visited a mosque to offer namaz. But all the Muslim Presidents and Vice-Presidents of India have visited temples and gurudwaras. I am sure that since Khushwant Singh is a learned man, he is aware of the tenets of Islam. Shrines which do not have idol-worship, are recognised as ahley kitaab. Jerusalem is, therefore, sacred to all three communities—the Muslims, the Christians and the Jews. Khushwant's remarks have a trace of Hindu fanaticism about them. He asks Mus lims to join the national mainstream. Does he mean that they should attend pujas, play holi, gamble during Deepawali and so on? Anisuddin, Rourkela

Khushwant Singh asserts that a Muslim visiting a hindu temple of a Sikn gurudwara is a rare thing. True perhaps, but he ignores the most obvious reason for this: they wouldn't be allowed inside, they might even be physically assaulted. By and large, our pundits detest the presence of "beefeaters" in the hallowed precincts of our temples. It should be remembered that it is the orthodox Hindu who refuses to let others inferior in rank, into the kitchen or the puja room. Uncommon though it sounds, Muslims do frequent temples, ranging from the Kali temple in Calcutta to Tirupati; the Muslim community actively assists pilgrims who visit the Sabari Mela in Kerala.

Further, Khushwant Singh conveys the impression that the commercialism of religion is confined to dargahs only. Go to Kashi and see for yourself, Sardarji! I would like to quote a few lines from the famous Khwaja kı diwani:

Nufrut ka zahar baaton main ghol ke

Aa jayenge Khwaja unhen kuch bol ke

Yeh Nigaan-e-haqueeqat to tol ke

dekho (Dissolve your intolerance in words.

The Khwaja will come if you ask for him; consider the evidence of your eyes.)

G. Mukherjee, Calcutta

Khushwant Singh mentions that the only Muslim who made generous donations to non-Muslim shrines was the late Nizam of Hyderabad. Many good Muslims do contribute to the welfare of institutions of other communities. One of Orissa's famous engineers, the late Syed Mumtaz Ali, favoured both non-Muslim and Muslim causes and he always contributed generously to many poor non-Muslim institutions.

S. Jena, P. K. Das and A. V. Rao, Bhubaneswar

A man of Khushwant Singh's erudition should know that Islam is basically a monotheistic faith and everything in it flows from one premise-God or Allah is one. Muslims who are devout and believe in puritanism and shun blasphemy understand the futility of offerings at shrines.

M. Y. Sadique, Bhubaneswar

It is a matter of regret that the grand old man of indian journalism, Mr Khushwant Singh, has addressed Lieutenant General H. M. Ershad as President of Bangladesh (Ajmer Shareef, 10 April). We have a President named Justice Ahsanuddin Chowdhury and General Ershad is the Chief Mar tial Law Administrator as well as head of government, not head of state. Mesbah•ul Haq, Dhaka, Bangladesh

True. General Ershad's designations, however, also say he is the President of the council of ministers, Bangladesh—Editor

In his Gossip column (3 April), Khushwant Singh has correctly pointed out that at such a crucial stage when the economy is in a shambles, we should not have hosted the NAM summit. In addition to the IMF loan (5.7 billion dollars), we wanted liberalisation of IDA credits and aid from different quarters to keep our economy floating. When we were moving literally with a begging bowl in our hands, we should not have staged the Asiad which was such a colossal waste of money. No doubt, we have proved our organisational capacity, but at what cost? Primary attention must be paid to fulfilling the needs of the common man.

Narendra Kalra, New Delhi

Of truth and trivia

The interview with Arun Shourie made interesting reading (Life at and after Express, 17 April). His views on editors and journalists will certainly help others in the profession.

M. B. Belakeri, Bangalore

Arun Shourie admitted that he functioned both as an executive and an editor in the Indian Express because he had found that anyone wanting to help the chaotic Indian Express must help solve the management problems. A document of the Indian Express Employees' Union, Delhi, illustrates how he tried to do it and possibly also why

he had been hired by Mr Goenka. On 15 September 1979, the union said in a message to the Express employees: "On Saturday, 8 September, Arun Shourie, executive editor of the Indian Express, came to the editorial hall in a greatly excited state and announced that he was going to crush our union. The reason for this loss of balance, he seemed to indicate, was the raising of our struggle fund, which he called 'bitchery.' You may have heard of this bizarre incident. At the present stage of our struggle to get our long standing legitimate demands met, this episode cannot be ignored. The union considers it necessary to point out to the Express employees and all those interested in the welfare and freedom of journalism, the significance of this incident.

"Shri Shourie poses as a fighter against fascism and a champion of human rights. In the long process of negotiations in which he has taken part on the side of the management, he has not been able to argue seriously that any one of the union's demands is unjustified. On the contrary, he agreed that the demands were genuine. His problem is that he is not able to stand up to the proprietor of the Indian Express. He has therefore compromised with his much vaunted principles and agreed to serve his employer by trying to wreck the Indian Express Employees' Union...

"Shri Shourie is threatening to get the employees' demands met outside the union. Let him explain why he has taken up the assignment of crushing the union if he is in a position to accept the demands—the same demands which he discussed with the union for months...Union wrecking is attempted by the management when it tries to but cannot stop the employees from demanding their dues. Shri Shourie is now the proprietor's executor of a dirty job very samiliar in trade union history..."

P. Dasgupta, New Delhi

A common friend drew my attention to Arun Shourie's interview to Facets, reproduced in Sunday. As always I glanced with great interest through what Arun had to say. And as always Arun has spoken for the record. Permit me to set it right in regard to just one small part in which he mentions—and misquotes—me. I am referring to the following paragraph:

"The third small article had just five or six paragraphs. I had done the article called The Second Coincidence. It was a conversation. It was on Sanjay's death anniversary. It was meant as an innocuous middle. The previous evening about 10-45 Chandra Sekhar said to me, 'Are kaal teis taarıkh hai.' The first para was of just two lines. It said, 'I can testify to but two coincidences in my life. Here I shall report the second. This is just a way of teasing the reader who would wonder what is the first coincidence. That was all. And it went on to narrate the incidents. It was just a small little tease. I sent it. The assistant editor, Sumer Kaul, cros-ed out the first three lines and wrote on it Witness To A Prophecy, as if I was writing for B. V. Raman's *Astrological Magazine*! So I sent him a nice little message: 'Be reasonable. Do it my way.' He said, 'Perfectly all right. I cut it out for this reason. I agree that this can be a tease. But you know, Nihal Singh is very sensitive. Now that the article has passed through him,-- I had cut it out innocently-but he has approved it. Please tell him.'

Arun knows me well enough to know that I do not cut out anything "innocently," and have never done so in all the ten years I have edited the Express edit page. The cuts I make are either for reasons of space or because the portions/sentences/words concerned are libellous or factually incorrect or repetitious or irrelevant or unintelligible or--Arun knows thissheer nonsense. In the 'middle' in question, Arun never said anything about his opening sentences being "just a way of teasing the reader," and therefore there was no question of my agreeing or disagreeing with him on that point. In fact, whatever discussion took place on that article between Arun and me was almost entirely through written messages since he was in Bangalore at the time. Here is what actually transpired.

From Arun Shourie, Bangalore To Mr Sumer Kaul, Delhi

My dear Sumer,

I am sending you a middle for 22 June, the anniversary of the great crash. I wrote it last evening, anxious that you clear and schedule it before you go on leave for surely after you the deluge. Let me know if it passes your standards.

I sent him a message on the teleprinter saying that I had received the article, made some changes and passed it on to the chief editor. Whereupon he sent me

the following note:

My dear Sumer,
I will hate you for ever if you make
any changes. The literal truth is important in this case. I am recording a
bit of history...but if it is totally
unacceptable do let me know over
the teleprinter, I will shove it in
Sunday Standard.

So I sent him a note, listing the

changes.

Have deleted the Kripalanisque opening para; no other change except, on page two, 'shall not com-

mence' becomes 'shall not have commenced,' and in the next line, 'that such' becomes 'when.' And yes, the heading is Witness to a Prophecy. Hardly enough not to hate me fore-

ver, wouldn't you say?

On receiving this, Arun tried to telephone me but when he got through I had left the office. So he talked to a colleague and told him to request me to restore the heading and the opening lines. (There was no question of undoing the other changes since those concerned elementary grammar.) He also sent me a note by air container:

My dear Sumer,

No, No, No. For heaven's sake, No!!! The first para must remain. It isn't like Kripalani but straight out of one of my favourite tale-spinners: Borges. And so must the heading.

Here, with my compliments, is what should be the motto among friends (he had got printed the slogan, 'Be reasonable, do it my way'). As I am the first to have flung it, this time it should be my way. Lest you send the thinking back to me.

I recalled the middle from the typist and read out the deleted opening lines to two senior colleagues. They, too, saw no connection between Arun's intro and what followed. So I sent the piece back for typing and sent the following

I still feel that the opening will go over the heads of the readers, just as none of us here could fathom it. Relax, the deletion takes away nothing from your piece.

Followed frantic telephone calls, requesting me to retain the heading and the opening lines. I sent him the following message:

My dear Arun,

message to Arun.

Honestly!

I went to Mr Nihal Singh. Since he had approved the cut, I had to ask him if I could restore it. He said no. As a friend I suggest you let it be. Just relax and enjoy yourself in salubrious Bangalore. You can of course use the hot line (that is, ring up Nihal) but do it only if you must. After this Arun came to Delhi and repeated that he had taken the opening lines from his favourite tale-spinner, and recommended Borges to me. 'Tell me,' I asked him, 'Who do you write for—the general run of readers or

one or two friends—in this case, those who may also have read Borges?' 'Readers will understand, yar,' was his reply.

The next day he told me that Mr

Nihal Singh had refused to restore the cuts and that he (Arun) was withdrawing the article and would send it some-

where else.

I am almost sure Arun did not mean to misquote me. The words he put in my mouth probably are words he would have liked to hear from me. But that is not the way it happened. If I have narrated in detail what really happened, it is in deference to Arun's devotion to literal truth—and to trivia. Sumer Kaul, New Delhi

The Violent Search For Khalistan



What was simply a passion hidden in extremist hearts is now being openly demanded in Punjab. The 'Give us Khalistan' sentiment has moved from the fringes to the centre of the stage. In this extensive report we look at the complex of views and realities that make up the Punjab situation today. The recent riots in Patiala highlight the dangerous shapes that the current madness could assume. In the opening piece, TAVLEEN SINGH reports from Amritsar that Sant Bhindranwale and his followers seem to have taken over the movement.

unjab is running out of time. The madness must stop. There is no time left any more to ask who started it all and why, there is only time left to ask what can be done to stop it. Already it is no longer just a question of a few individuals, the madness seems to have picked up a momentum of its own and much work will be required to halt its dangerous, dizzying descent to nowhere. By 2 May Patiala had witnessed the passions of a dangerous Sikh-Hindu riot—and the signs were that it could only get worse unless someone found some answers. One answer that can never be is Khalistan. Neither can the centre seriously consider the demand that the Akali Dal has made in the Anandpur Sahib resolution for a new Punjab where "the centre's interference would be restricted to defence, foreign relations, currency and general communication."

The whole question of official Akali demands has, in fact, been reduced to irrelevance, because it is no longer clear what they want. The general public can, therefore, not really be blamed for believing that it makes no difference whether the demands are conceded or not because the agitation—now called the dhar*amyudh*—will continue anyway, till the Sikhs get their own "state." If this is not in the shape of a Khalistan, then at least a state in which Sikh culture, Sikh religion and Sikh

thought would dominate.

This was said to me, in so many words, by almost everyone I met in Amritsar from Balbir Singh Sandhu to Sant Harchand Singh Longowal. The only difference was that whereas the president of the Akali Dal said, "We want the autonomy that we have asked for in the Anandpur Sahib resolution," the secretary general of the Khalistan movement said, "We want Khalistan because we saw that the Punjabi suba gave the Sikhs nothing and we know that even if the Anandpur Sahib demands are conceded in full, the Sikhs will still get nothing."

I arrived in Amritsar the day after the shooting of DIG Avtar Singh Atwal and the unfortunate, innocent, 11-year-old, Virinderjit. The atmosphere of the city was troubled and tense and inside the Golden Temple area, around the Guru Nanak Nivas. there was an undercurrent of violence, as if at any minute they were expecting an attack by the police. Several people even admitted this. What would happen then, I asked. "We are ready for them," came the reply. "There will be a massacre."

All current Sikh thinking, at least the kind that one can hear, emanates from two old-fashioned, whitewashed buildings which stand side by side facing one of the entrances to the Golden Temple. One building houses the offices of the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurud-



Akalis surging out of the Golden Temple for the morcha

The Akali Dal's links with the Congress(I)



Sant Longowal (right) and Tohra

It has long been said that in Pun-jab the Akalis and the Congres s(1) have always safeguarded each other's interests. The links between these two parties do indeed go back over the years. In the Fifties, during the time of the Akali suba agitation, the late Mr Pratap Singh Kairon clearly impressed upon Jawaharlal Nehru that it would be politically wise to let a Sikh chief minister sort out the problems of the Akalis. The centre agreed and Mr Kairon not merely dexterously kept the Akali agitation alive, but he also retained his position as the chief minister by showing the centre that he could firmly handle the Akalis. In actuality, of course, he was never interested in crushing the agitation. Other chief ministers, too, followed the same strategy with one or the other section of the Akalıs. They would foment trouble in the state and then impress the centre with a great show of containing the strife, in order to cover their failure in other administrative areas.

Many of the present Sikh leaders in the Congress(I) are known to have once associated themselves with the Akalis in their Punjabi suba demand. Punjab was formed in 1966 and from that year till 1972, there was political instability in the state, as politicians flitted from one party to the next. Giani Zail Singh (now the President of India), left the Akalis to join the Congress and became the chief minister in 1972.

Giani Zail Singh was a pracharak of the SGPC and has had close links in the Akali Dal. During his chief ministership he had won over Akali leaders like G. S. Tohra, J. S. Talwandi and J. S. Umranangal and he could exercise considerable influence on the activities of the Akalis. He even supported Prakash Singh Badal—to check the influence of his own rivals like H. S. Brar. He had also won over Baba Santa Singh, the Ramgarhia Nihang. With

all these close contacts with the Akalis, Giani Zail Singh had proved to Mrs Indira Gandhi that he was competent to deal effectively with the Akalis. The famous Anandpur Sahib resolution which was passed in 1974, was also during the tenure of Gianiji's chief ministership.

In 1977 when the government came to power a hue and cry was raised to prosecute Giani Zail Singh for his alleged corrupt practices as the chief minister between 1972 and 1977. However, it is well known that Prakash Singh Badal's government was not really interested in investigating the charges, largely because of the support Gainiji had extended to him during his chief ministership.

In 1980, when the Congress(I) won the elections, Gaini Zail Singh did not return as the CM of the state; Darbara Singh, his rival in Punjab politics did. Darbara Singh realised the need to prove to the centre that he could effectively control the Akalis. Therefore, he lost no time in supporting the Akali Dal (Talwandi) to make it an adequate rival to the Akali Dal (Longowal). He also won over the group of Nihangs of Baba Kahan Singh. But it is believed that Giani Zail Singh, who had better connections in both factions of the Akali Dal, managed to convince the Akalis to start an agitation against Darbara Singh's government. Darbara Singh, in his turn, is said to have urged the Akali Dal (T) to start an agitation in Delhi for the implementation of the Anandpur Sahib resolution. Thus, rivalries within the Congress(1) only encouraged Akali activities in the state.

And finally, the story of how the ruling party supported Sant Bhindranwale is well known. However, what the Congress(I) did not realise their was that their own creation would, one day, turn against them.

Jagmeet Uppal

wara Prabandhak Committee and the other, the Guru Nanak Nivas, houses Sant Bhindranwale in room 47, with at least 200 of his followers, and Balbir Singh Sandhu in room 32.

If there is anyone who still believes that it is the Akali Dal and not Sant Bhindranwale who is calling the shots, they should visit the Golden Temple and find out for themselves. Bhindranwale's being in command can in fact be the only reason for the vacillation in the Akali stand.

Not so long ago in the Rajya Sabha the CPI(M) leader, Mr Harkishan Singh Surject, told this correspondent that during the last round of tripartite talks, differences had been narrowed down to almost nothing and had the government not pulled out at the last minute, there would have been an agreement. In the Akali Dal office in Amritsar, this view was reiterated by ex-MP Mr Ramoo Walia. The whole problem of Punjab could be solved in 15 minutes, he said, if the Prime Minister wanted it to be solved. The Akalis, according to him, were no longer insisting on the Anandpur Sahib resolution; all that they wanted was the water dispute settled by being sent to the Supreme Court and for a decision on the status of Chandigarh.

However, a very vital man did not quite agree that a solution was as easy as that. Sant Bhindranwale said categorically that the dharamyudh morcha would only end when the demands in the Anandpur Sahib resolution were conceded in full. When it was pointed out that even the Akalis were no longer insisting on this he said (see interview) that this was simply not true and if it was then Sant Longowal should say so in front of him.

Later, Sant Longowal did not deny that they wanted the autonomy that they had asked for in the Anandpur Sahib resolution. But he seemed reluctant to spell out exactly what he meant. The position was clarified a little by Harmindar Singh Sandhu (see interview) who said that they did not want Khalistan because they felt that the line in the Anandpur Sahib resolution "which speaks of creating such a desh where the separate Sikh identity, nationhood and thought would be developed is sufficient." So, a kind of Khalistan, a sort of Sikh state within the boundaries of India is in fact what the Akalis now want. This should not be obscured by debates on the water dispute and the Chandigarh issue.

As for the Anandpur Sahib resolution itself, there is some confusion about whether the one currently being distributed by the Akalis is in fact the original one (adopted on 16-17 October 1973 at Anandpur Sahib) which spoke clearly about the Sikhs being a nation. The English version of the resolution given to this correspondent by Sant Longowal states at the very beginning that "The Shiromani Akali Dal aims at

grooming the Sikhs into a strong and sturdy nation, highly educated, fully aware of its fundamental rights, very well versed in various arts and ever ready to honour the more outstanding of its sons." The words "Sikh nation" are used again in paragraph two: "The Shiromani Akali Dal regards the educationalists, scientists, philosophers, writers and artists of the Sikh nation as its most prized assets." Then on page 20 the political goal of the Akali Dal is stated: "The fundamental policy of the Shiromani Akali Dal is to seek the realisation of this birthright of the Khalsa through creation of congenial environment and a political setup."

Under a sub-heading, 'For attainment of this aim', there is a list of seven points of which point 1 is divided into A, B and C. 1(A) relates to merging Punjabi-speaking areas around Punjab with Punjab and (B) says, "In this new Punjab and in other states the centre's interference would be restricted to defence, foreign relations, currency and general communication, all other departments would be in the jurisdiction of Punjab (and other states) which would be fully entitled to frame its own laws on these subjects for administration. For the above departments of the centre, Punjab and other states contribute in proportion to representation in the Parliament."

So when the Akali Dal speaks of

autonomy what is meant is absolute autonomy: to quote Harmindar Singh Sandhu again, a status similar to that of Nepal. He did not seem to realise that Nepal was actually a separate country. Nobody could possibly dispute that in Punjab, as in other Indian states, there is a vital need for greater autonomy for the state. That, however, is a separate question of the re-examination of the whole question of centre-state relations.

In Punjab the real tragedy is that because of the interference of people like Bhindranwale, and the looming shadow of Khalistan, the autonomy demand has become deeply mixed with religion so that it has come across as a demand for Sikh independence. The Akali Dal sowed such seeds with all their talk in the Anandpur Sahib resolution of "a Sikh nation" and Bhindranwale and his followers have merely carried the idea one step further. Perhaps Sant Bhindranwale's thinking has something to do with his educational limitations. A fifth class pass, a village preacher, he finds it easier to understand religion than economics. politics or autonomy. When this reporter asked the Sant about his political and economic views his answers were brief, "We support the policy of the Akali Party." In complete contrast were his replies on religion or the zulm being perpetrated on the Sikhs; he could continue talking

almost indefinitely on this topic.

lthough Sant Longowal remains The formal "dictator" of the dharamyudh morcha it is Bhindranwale who is the de facto leader. The volunteers who gather at the Akal Takht every day to vow to be prepared to die for the cause, go first to get the blessings of Sant Bhindranwale. Then they tie pieces of saffron cloth on their heads (kesar being the auspicious colour to wear when going to war) and first visit the Golden Temple after which they collect below the Akal Takht (literally the throne of the timeless one). There a jathedar of the SGPC makes them take a vow that from that day onwards they will be prepared to give their lives for the service of the panth: "Mera sir aj to panth nu hazir hai" (panth means the Sikh community).

The jathedar explains to them the meaning of what they are doing. "What this means is that when the president of the Akali Dal sends for you, you have eight hours in which to leave everything you are doing and turn up to do whatever he asks you to. Remember that nothing else will be considered as important as this—whether some young man is getting married or engaged or anything, you have to leave whatever you are doing."

On Baisakhi when the first batch was sworn in, there were 33,500



volunteers; since then around 200 volunteers are being sworn in every day. The words of the vow seem to be deliberately ambiguous so that a lot of the volunteers seem to think that they are taking a vow for the protection of Sikhism. Most of them are simple villagers who understand very little about the Anandpur Sahib resolution. What they have been made to understand is that Sikhism is somehow in danger.

The other tragic aspect of what is happening in Punjab is that the Sikhism the people are being called upon to die for is a complete distortion of the original religion. Everything is being done in the name of the Khalsa but there is no real understanding of what that word means beyond the outer manifestations as

expressed in the five Ks.

Guru Govind Singh is no longer remembered as a man who above being a good soldier was a great philosopher and a man of deep tolerance. It has been forgotten for instance that it was he who wrote "Ishwar, allah tere naam, sab ko sanmati de bhagwan." And that he also wrote, "Hindus and Muslims are one. The same Lord is creator and nourisher of all. Recognise no distinction between them. The temple and the mosque are the same. Puja and namaz are the same. All men are one, it is through error that they appear different . . Allah and Abhek are the same, the Puranas and the Koran are the same. They are all the of the One" (Akal creation Ustat).

The Sikhism that is being nurtured and developed by the various political and religious leaders currently residing in the Golden Temple, is a religion of brigotry and ritual. Guru Govind Singh's concept of a Khalsa was not that of a man who would have attacked Nirankaris, for instance, for their beliefs, whatever they may have been. In any case this new Sikhism has been carefully mixed with political and economic demands, of which more than a few are genuine. The end product is a truly dangerous brew which could well destroy Punjab.

When we come to this it is simply not possible to avoid mentioning the incompetence, indifference and sheer idiocy of the Congress(I) in its handling of Punjab. In fact, if anyone can really be accused of being the root cause of the state's current difficulties, it is not Bhindranwale or the Akali party but our very own ruling party.

The story is an old one, but it is worth recounting in brief. Prakash Singh Badal had run a fairly efficient government and the Congress(I), when it came back to power in 1980, was not sure whether they would be able to defeat the Akalis in the state elections. When various efforts to try and split the Akalis failed, somebody



Pawan Kumar Sharma, president of the Hindu Suraksha Samity, who had organised the Ramnavami procession which led to rioting in Patiala on 2 May. Mr Sharma was an unemployed youth till he became a member of the Congress(I). He is believed to be a close associate of Amrinder Singh, who is aspiring to become the next chief minister of Punjab. Mr Sharma considers himself to be a Hindu answer to Sant Bhindranwale.

thought of the idea of propping up an obscure man called Bhindranwale who had been heard about now and then because of his outbursts against the Nirankaris.

According to Congress(I) sources, it was the combination of Sanjay Gandhi and Zail Singh (who had his own personal war to fight with Darbara Singh) which resulted in the build-up Bhindranwale initially got. Anyway, the net result was that they did such a good job of building him up that he became bigger than them and has today become bigger than the Akali party as well.

Today, he has taken over the Akali movement. He provides the mass appeal and his own limited kind of spiritual preaching; and adopts their official policy in return. He also has with him a large section of the Akali party's youth wing and a handful of former Naxalites who are believed to be among his closest advisers. The new, militant, aggressive and increasingly religious image of the Akali party has the definite stamp of Bhindranwale's style of functioning.

Any future talks between the Sikhs and the Centre would therefore necessarily have to include him or at least his representatives. Of course, the government has the alternative of arresting him since there are several charges against him; but unfortunately there is a large section of Sikhs in Punjab who do not believe that he is either an extremist or a criminal, and they would become violent if they felt that Bhindranwale was being martyred. In any case, top priority at the moment must go to finding a solution to the present impasse and some means of ending the dharamyudh.

But it became overwhelmingly obvious after a visit to Amritsar that on no account should any force be used by Delhi. Enough ordinary, second-rate men have been made into martyrs by unthinking police bullets.

What is required now is a more intelligent approach. Bhindranwale must be controlled through a mixture of reasoning and some gentle coercion. If he has some genuine grievances, for instance if some of his men have been unnecessarily arrested, then this should be set right. And where he is being unreasonable and inflammatory he must be persuaded to cut it out. The Congress(I) is perhaps the best judge of how this can be done; he is, after all, originally, their own creature.

Talks should begin immediately with the Akalis and they should be asked to call off their dharamyudh morcha till the talks are concluded. They must be asked to clarify exactly what they want and the government must tell them clearly what they can get and what is out of the question.

The Akalis must be told to end their open protection of known Khalistan supporters like Balbir Singh Sandhu, and they must be persuaded to be less communal in their approach to the Punjab problem. For instance, the pamphlet that they are distributing to explain why they have started the dharamyudh morcha begins with, "Valiant Khalsaji: It is well known that the Sikhs, as a minority, have been discriminated against and have been meted out the treatment of second grade citizens in India for the last 35 years."

The Congress(I) has not shown any great intelligence so far; typical was its attitude during the Asian Games. Whenever one asked ordinary Sikhs about why they felt they were discriminated against they invariably brought up the fact that nobody with a beard and turban was allowed into Delhi during the Asian Games. This kind of mistake must never be repeated; it has caused unbelievable damage. Political parties, especially the national opposition parties, must stop using Punjab to either fish in troubled waters or to make Punjab the graveyard of the ruling party. Punjab is not Mrs Gandhi's problem; it is India's.

One of the worst things that has happened is the division of the state into Sikhs and Hindus with an ever widening gap of hatred and communal tension between them. Some of this is the direct result of the emergence of people like Bhindranwale but the rest has definitely been created by political parties and vested interests. The BJP's involvement in the Patiala riots was clear from the very first day.

When the agitation for declaring Amritsar a holy city was started, a procession was taken out by Hindus in which lighted cigarettes were carried on kirpans. The slogans raised included "Kacch, Kada, Kirpan, enoo bhejo Pakistan." This is something that has never been forgotten by the Sikhs of Amritsar, and was mentioned as evidence of Hindu communalism by virtually everyone in the Golden Temple. Communalism,

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either Sikh or Hindu, and the state's entire drift towards destruction can only be stopped if rational members of both communities realise that they have a definite role to play in countering the madness.

Hindus tend to be suspicious of any demands for autonomy made in Punjab because they immediately regard them as a veiled demand for Khalistan. If they could understand once and for all that there will never be a Khalistan then they would perhaps be more sympathetic because some of the Sikh demands are genuine. As for people like Balbir Singh Sandhu and Jagjit Singh Chauhan, they have little more than entertainment value. To quote a member of the Akali Dal, "A man who puts up his Khalistan board

inside a locked room is hardly likely to come out into the field and fight."

Finally, of course, Sikhs in Punjab and in the rest of the country must accept that there can never be a Khalistan. To partition India again would require the intervention of an army better than India's or more likely the joint forces of the United States and USSR. Since this is a remote possibility, so is Khalistan.

'Punjab is the land of fighters, saints and lovers'

Amrita Pritam, noted writer and Jnanpith award winner tells MADHU JAIN

Q: What do you think about the concept of Sikhs as a separate quom? How would you define quom?

A I would define it according to language Language and culture.

Q: Then how would you differentiate between a Punjabi Hindu and a Sikh?

A To my mind religion is a very pure and private thing. Pure and personal. The state of mind, the beautiful state of mand. For people to understand this question of religion we will have to go back to ancient times, the Vedas-to the origin of dharam and the concept of religion. For instance, there are so many words which are now so misunderstood For example, yagya, quom, are the outer symbols. They were considered as abhinaya, the state of mind. We stop at the word, where abhinava starts. These were the outer symbols, for example, fire -yagya--was the burning quest for the ultimate. Likewise, pushubalı. Pushubalı dıdn't mean that you would take the animals and cut off their heads in the temples. The word pushu you will have to under stand was used for the form of poetry, chhan That was called pushu, the carrier. That was the reason, they called it pushu...even human beings were called parmatma (god) ka pushu. That means he could carry the word within himself; the same way the form of poetry, chhan, was called pushu and pushubali meant that you should cut the form of the poetry and go deep into the meanings... And people took these things literally, instead of symbolically.

Q: Do you think people are now lost in symbols, in such things as the size of the kirpan they should

carry, etc.?

A: All the symbols. One need not mention one symbol or the other. We have reduced our thinking to the outer form and have forgotten the state of mind and soul.

Q: Do you think that state should be separate from religion? Are the

two being mixed up in Punjab?

A: As I said before, religion is a very personal thing. Actually, the church and state collaborated to enslave the people. The state enslaved them physically and the church enslaved the man's soul. So it is a collaboration...

Q: There might be something else which continues to irritate the Sikhs: the Hindus persist in saying that Sikhs are Hindu. The Sikhs

resent this...

A: Actually we 'll belong to the soil of this cour y. We may be Muslim, we may be Sikh, it is a question of personal principles. Sikhism was a good concept to fight the evils of the country, to fight the oppressors, the invaders. There was no question of caste and creed. Anybody who believed in those principles could join that army. And it was a beautiful thing.

Q: Do you think that it is a problem of identity for the Sikhs?

A: Actually, it should be a problem of language and literature.

Q: Do you think that the Sikh demands are irrational?

A: The demands may be genuine, such as those for water, and adequate fertilisation of the land or other facilities. But this should be the common demand from all the people.

Q: Hindus tend to make a lot of jokes about the Sikhs... This must be hurting their sentiments.

Amrita Pritam



A: There are jokes about others the Jains. Even in the socialist countries there are beautiful jokes about communism.

Q: I was talking to some of the younger people... The young boys, for instance, resent being teased in school about their long hair ..

A: That's wrong (on the part of) the people who tease... Actually Punjab is the land of very good fighters, saints and lovers... They actually saved the country All the invaders came through Punjab. And if Punjabis were not there to fight them, the country would have been enslaved centuries ago... Mostly, I find that Sikhs are very honest—the common workers, like taxi drivers (are honest).

Q: Do you think a rift is taking place between the Hindus and the Sibbe?

Sikhs?

A: I think ritts are created by some people.. The common man wants to live in peace.

Q: How do you explain the rise of Sant Bhindranwale?

A: I don't know him personally. There is always a 'rise' of some people from time to time

Q: What would you say is essentially the difference between a Sikh and a Punjabi Hindu?

A: The difference is a very personal thing.... Faith is very personal. We had wonderful Sufi poets in Punjab. Sufism flourished in Punjab. The Rig-Vedas were written on the banks of the five rivers.

Q: Do you think that this talk of Khalistan is going to lead anywhere?

where?

A: I can't understand politics. I always deal with people on the human level. For example, I visited a place in Russia, a big school with children from all the republics, and to keep their identity intact, different dresses were made for the children according to their culture. They spoke their respective mother tongues. So, one can keep one's identity and be a good Indian, and I would like to say, a good human being.

'There is no alternative to Khalistan'

Balbir Singh Sandhu told SUNDAY

Q: What do you have to say about the killing of the DIG, Mr Atwal?

A: It has the air of a carefully planned palace coup, it is not the work of some over-emotional Sikh, I see behind it the hand of an experienced Congress(I) politician. There are two reasons for it, first to give the Sikhs who are fighting for a real cause a bad name and second, it has been done to destroy the tradition that an attack in this particular place (the Durbar Sahib) will be considered an attack on the entire Sikh community.

Q: What comment do you want to make on the home minister's statement that you should be thrown out of the Guru Nanak Nivas and handed over to the government since you talk openly about a free Kha-

listan?

A: To talk about freedom for the Khalsa quom is the fundamental right of every Sikh. It is a right that he gets in his heritage. Whether we are in Guru Nanak Nivas, whether in an underground office somewhere or among the rural people, we will keep making this demand till we get Khalistan.

Anybody who is working for the Khalsa raj cannot be thrown out because it would be considered (by the people) as an act against the

Sikh quom.

Q: But the Akalis have said over and over again that they do not believe at all in Khalistan.

A: You should ask those who say this that if they do not believe in the Khalsa and in the Khalsa raj then what do they mean when they talk about the Khalsa as an azad hasti and when they talk about the Khalsa's victory (bolbala). What is left of the meaning of Jahan jahan Khalsaji sahib, tahan tahan raccheya rehat' (Wherever there is the Khalsa he will protect the quom). Ask them. This is the responsibility of the Khalsa (literally the pure), to do this. It is a right given to the Khalsa in our scriptures.

Q: How did the saying 'Raj

kareyga khalsa' originate?

A: When we were fighting the Moghuls, the soldiers used to go into the field of battle with the war cry 'Jo boley so nihal sat Sri Akal and they would then say 'Raj Kareyga Khalsa' (the Khalsa will rule) to give themselves determination. This is something that Sikhs are taught in their childhood. It is given to them in their gurhti the first sip of liquid given to a newborn). This is why during the independence struggle of 1947 the Congress Party had decided to give the

Sikh community an area to themselves where they could be able to keep alive their independent traditions

Q: They didn't speak about a

separate country?

A: Let's make one thing clear, if they had at that time talked about a separate country then we would have taken it. That the Sikhs did not themselves ask for a separate country was their mistake and we are still suffering for that mistake. But even without asking for a separate country, the Sikh leadership had got the centre's leadership to agree, and Jawaharlal Nehru also said so, that in the north they would have no objections to the Sikhs being given certain special rights.

O: You mean like in Kashmir? A: We don't believe that the special status that has been given to Kashmir is special at all. Poor Kashmir, it has really been condemned to a life of slavery. This Article 370 is nothing, this can be ended at any time with a slight change in the Constitution of India. But the Sikhs had been promised special rights in their own special region. When the Sikhs realised that leave alone a special place they were not even being considered a separate quom, then among the youth and the intellectuals there began to be born the desire for their own homeland. That's how the Punjabi suba demand started but after that was given nothing had changed and therefore there was the Anandpur Sahib resolution in 1973. We believe that just as after the Punjabi suba the Sikhs got nothing, they will get nothing from the Anandpur Sahib resolution either. That's why we believe that there is no alternative but to have a sovereign state—an Azad Khalistan; there is no alternative for the Sikhs.

Balbir Singh Sandhu



Q: How much support do you think you have from the average Sikh?

A: On 4 November 1982, the Shiromani Akali Dal had a very big convention at Manji Sahib. There were about 75,000 chosen Sikhs, people who understand politics and they all recognised Khalistan and for at least an hour there was discussion on Khalistan and over and over again slogans were raised in favour of Khalistan. As far as our own membership is concerned, we can say with pride and certainty that if at this very spot the Akali Dal took a referendum among the ordinary Sikhs, they would find that almost all of them were in favour of Khalistan. We challenge them to do it. If the Akalis say they are against Khalistan then the people will vote against them. This is a challenge from me to them, let them have some sort of a referendum and let's see what happens.

Q: When will there be Khalistan?
A: It could be by sunrise, it could take ten years.

Q: Are Sant Bhindranwale and

the Akalis with you?

A: There's one thing we want to make quite clear: Sant Jarnail Singhji Khalsa Bhindranwale has drawn the Sikh masses back towards the gurbani and given them the strength to go back to following their old traditions, this has helped to create in their hearts a desire for Khalistan. Where the Akali Dal is concerned, we feel that this morcha that they have started in the name of the Anandpur Sahib resolution, this has also strengthened the determination among the people to have the Khalsa really rule. If the Akalis, or a group of them, betray the morcha, then the people will lose faith in them and there would be a direct wave in favour of Kha-

Q: What if the government gives them what they want and the morcha ends?

A: The morcha will not end, not end, not end. Till there is a Khalsa raj the agitation will continue.

Q: What if the government sends in the army to prevent the country

from breaking apart?

A: This government is nothing compared to the Moghul government and now the time is different; if ten Sikhs are killed you can hear about it all over the world. Then when men could be killed and tortured without anyone finding out, we weren't defeated by the Moghuls, and we won't be now even if they bring in their armies.

'Nobody with a beard was allowed to enter Delhi during the Asiad'

What needs to be done to O: bring peace to Punjab?

A: The government knows.

Q: Will there be peace after your demands are met?

A: The government knows everything.

Q: What are your demands?

A: Our demands are clear.

Q: Is the problem just of Chandigarh and water or are you insisting on the autonomy requested in the Anandpur Sahib resolution?

A: The Anandpur Sahib resolution is the policy programme of the Akali party, all our demands have been expressed in it, that is what we are fighting for.

Q: So if your demands are conceded there will be peace...

A: If they announce that all our demands have been met why

should we fight?

Q: Yesterday I saw your volunteers for the dharamyudh being sworn in at the Akal Takht and immediately after the religious slo-. gan, 'Jo boley so mhal', there were political slogans like Shiromani Akalı Dal zindabad. Why have you mixed politics with religion in this fashion?

A: We haven't mixed it, in Sikhism politics and religion are the same thing. Bhakti and shakti are together, shakti comes through bhakti. Do you know that the name of the place where the swearing-in is taking place is the Akal Takht (the throne of the timeless one, God). The throne of Delhi is the root of oppression and injustice but as against the takht of Delhi there is the Akal Takht where we go to resolve to fight injustice and to make sacrifices.

Q: But you've turned the gurudwara into something to be used for

political ends.

A: What you don't understand is that we are using it for the right purpose. In the Granth Sahib it is written that an evil king is like a butcher, it is your religious duty to fight him. Kings, tigers, the kings' agents and dogs-beware of them. The raja is Darbara Singh, the raja is Indira Gandhi. The Granth Sahib which is our guru has used very harsh words about evil rajas; when we bow our heads before the Granth Sahib we are supposed to make a resolve to fight 'zulm' (injustice). It is our dharam to protect the poor, oppressed masses from the oppressor.

Q: In the list of demands that you've given me, you say that Sikhs are treated as second class citizens. How are we second class citizens?

Sant H,S. Longowal told SUNDAY

I'm a Sikh myself and I've never

A: You haven't? Do you live in this country?

Q: Yes.

A: Well, if you haven't found this out yet then what else are you going to find out.

Q: That's why I would like you to explain to me. I'd like to understand why you think we're second

class citizens. A: Whenever (a representative of) the Akali Dal goes to Delhi with a demand, for each demand he has to sacrifice at least four or five men. When we took out a procession to commemorate our martyrs, they killed four innocent men, then they put restrictions on every other road. Is it their (centre's) personal property? Does it not belong to the country? Look what happened during the Asiad; forget about our Sikhs, they didn't even spare the Congress Sikhs. Nobody with a beard was allowed to enter Delhi.

O: Don't you feel that there is oppression of Muslims and Hindus?

A: Well even that is bad. Q: So it is the government that is bad, it is not that they are especial-

ly spiteful to the Sikhs. A: No, they are. Hindus and Muslims are not prevented from going down certain roads.

Q: Of course they are.

A: Absolutely not.

Q: I'm only trying to understand how the Sikhs are being treated any worse than the Hindus.

A: The Hindus are not being treated badly, only the Sikhs are. Q: Give me some examples.

A: There are hundreds, pick up

Sant Longowal



any newspaper and read. Look what happened during the Asian

Q: Yes, I agree with you there but that was the first time that Sikhs were treated in this way.

A: Immediately after independence when Sardar Patel was the home minister he wrote letters describing the Sikhs as a criminal people; they are here in the library,

Sikh is expected to be an inch taller and have an inch wider chest before he is taken into the army whereas a Hindu can be smaller. You can find out from the army, this is a rule.

Q: But this is only because the

Sikhs are taller as a race.

A: This is exactly what we're trying to get Indira Gandhi to accept: that we are a separate race.

Q: You also talk about government interference in gurudwaras. What kind of interference do you

A: Did they not interfere to make Santokh Singh win? Did she (Mrs Gandhi) not change the act to make him president? Is this not interfer-

Q: So basically your demands are listed in the Anandpur Sahib re-

solution?

A: I already told you that was the policy of the party. To it we add demands from time to time like for instance about the kirpan—without a kirpan a Sikh is not allowed to drink or eat... and they don't let us get onto a plane from Amritsar to Delhi with a *kirpan*.

Q: So basically there's no difference between what Sant Bhindranwale wants and what you want?

A: The policy is that of the Akali Dal, other Sikhs support it.

Q: But Bhindranwale seems to have joined you; he says he will leave the Guru Nanak Nivas only

after the morcha ends. A: Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale started his morcha when they arrested two of his men-Amreek Singh and Thara Singh; we added on the Anandpur Sahib resolution and said we would also fight for that. We are also fighting for the innocent men who have been arrested.

O: This is what I mean, your policy is now the same as Bhindran-

A: The policy is that of the Akali Dal. Sant Jarnail Singh supports us, so do other mahapurush (holy men) like Sant Clarenawaley, Rarewala Sant, Nihang Singh Baba, Baba Harnam Singh, they have all taken out jathas in our support.

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'The father of the Sikh nation is Guru Govind Singh, not Gandhi'

Harmindar Singh Sandhu's name is mentioned in the list of 'extremists' that the government has given to the SGPC authorities, asking that they be extradited from the Guru Nanak Nivas. Sandhu, who is the general secretary of the Akali Dal's youth wing, the Sikh Students Federation, is an articulate, intense law student who believes in the politics of Sant Bhindranwale. There are at least 20 cases against him and he has spent one year in jail and a year in hiding in the Guru Nanak Nivas.

O: Were you ever a Naxalite?

Q: Is it true that a large number of former Naxalites have joined Sant Bhindranwale?

A: Yes, the important ones are now all in jail—Tarsem Singh, Nacchatar Singh, Amarjit Singh Chawla and others.

Q: Don't you find it strange that they should move from Marxism to religion?

A: No, you see verything that there is in Marxism can be found in Sikhism—it has more socialism and equality than any other religion in the world. They found that even if they died as Naxalites they got no sympathy from the Sikh masses, whereas if they died for Sikhism they got all the sympathy.

Q: Why do you feel so many young people have been attracted to Sant

Bhindranwale?

A: You see for a while Sikh youths had turned their face away from Sikhism, mainly because the Akali leadership had become passive—they had adjusted to the so-called democratic system. To be a Sikh and to be young, necessarily means to be adventurous. Sant Bhindranwale offered us the adventure.

Q: So if Bhindranwale is the leader, then what about the Akali Dal?

A: The Akali Dal is the political representative party of the Sikhs, it has a history of sacrifices. While the Sikh youths support Sant Bhindranwale on religion, in a political sense they are hardcore Akalis. They can never move away from the policies of the Akali Party.

Q: So Bhindranwale and the Akalis are both saying the same thing?

A: Yes, they are together and if there is any difference then it is the Sikh Students Federation which tries to bring them closer.

Q: Elsewhere in the country most youths are inclined towards the left, towards Marxism. Isn't it strange that here it should be towards religion?

A: You see in other parts of the country they have nothing like Sikh-

Harmindar Singh Sandhu told SUNDAY

ism in their culture. Sikhism talks of socialism, equality, democracy, welfare for everyone and even universal brotherhood. You won't find this in any other religion. When you already have a superior ideology why should a new one come in? It is only because of the disinterest of our religious leaders that for a while there was a chance for Marxism to spread in Punjab. Now with the revival of Sikh fundamentalism, things have changed completely.

Q: What about Islam? Didn't Sikhism borrow the ideals of equality and

brotherhood from Islam?

A: I'll tell you the difference. In Islam a woman cannot pray in a masjid. That's not equality. Secondly in Islam they believe that only those who believe in Islam are right and the rest are Kafirs. Then no Hindu can go into a masjid and no Muslim can enter a mandir whereas anyone can go into a gurudwara.

Q: That's all very well but what will happen if Hindus and Muslims also start mixing religion with politics? Why do you mix religion with

politics?

A: The Sikh is a soldier and a saint, the two cannot be separated. This is our fight with the centre, this was also our fight with the Mughals and the British.

Q: But by bringing religion into politics, confusing political and religious demands, don't you feel that to some extent you have been responsible for alienating the Hindus?

A: I don't agree with you at all. Firstly because I consider Guru Hargovind Sahib my guru and he taught us that religion and politics were completely inseparable, they are an integral part of each other...on one side the Golden Temple, on the other

Harmindar Single Sandhu



side the Akal Takht. Besides, the Sikhs believe in fighting to defend those of other faiths also. Guru Tegh Bahadur gave his head to defend the Hindu right to wear a jenoi (sacred thread) and here in Amritsar, his birthplace, where there is a gurudwara, the Hindus throw filth, tobacco and cigarettes and if we go to that gurudwara—which is in a Hindu area—then we are considered communal. Only the majority community can be communal: minorities are fighting to save their culture.

Q: What do you think about Khalistan?

A: The Sikh Students Federation supports the Anandpur Sahib resolution and we believe that the demand which speaks of creating such a desh where the separate Sikh identity, nationhood and thought would be developed, is sufficient.

Q: So that means a separate

country?

A: Not necessarily. The Nepalese are also living within India and are still separate. There are also Muslims, Christians who are considered separate communities. We want a Sikh personal law and a separate Sikh Marriage Act. We are not Hindus.

Q: Why do you want a separate

personal law?

A: Our culture would be preserved. We don't want to break away from India, we just want Sikhs to have the same rights as Hindus. The Sikhs have done a great deal for this country and this is never projected: in fact even what is presented is distorted. There's a book for instance, prescribed for the eighth class by the Delhi education board which says that Guru Govind Singh started fighting the Moghuls because he was very angry about his father being killed. Mahatma Gandhi said about Guru Govind Singh that he was a 'misguided patriot,' he wrote it in his book on the Sikhs. These people consider Gandhi the father of the nation; we don't. The father of the Sikh nation is Guru Govind Singh. When we bave a separate nation...

Q: What do you mean by nation?
A: Nation, uh, nation, culture, meaning culture. Now for instance a child is taught from the minute he is born that Gandhi is his pita (father) and Nehru is his chacha (uncle) and so and so is his mata (mother). We don't agree. Guru Govind Singh created us and if Mahatma Gandhi is going to abuse him why should we consider him our rashtra pita (father of the nation)? These slaves, the press, television, the media, they

accept this, we don't.

'Death is a game for a Sikh'

Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale told SUNDAY

What do you have to say about the DIG being killed outside the Darbar Sahib?

A: The Sikh does not believe in violence especially not in front of the Harimandar Sahib; no Sikh can ever believe in this. This has been done deliberately to make the dharmayudh morcha unsuccessful. It is a conspiracy to lay the grounds for the police to enter the Darbar Sahib. This could only be the work of the government.

Q: What is going to happen now? It looks as if Punjab is going to be

completely destroyed.

A: It is up to the government to decide what it wants to do, it is in their hands to bring peace or destruction. It is the government's job not mine. I am for peace, I believe there should be peace in the country.

Q: But they say you are responsible for escalating the trouble?

A: Who says this?

Q: The government, everybody...

A: They say I'm doing it, I say they are doing it, you can write what you want.

Q: How can things be resolved?

A: By doing what I say: give the Sikhs their rights.

Q: You mean the Akali demands... A: Do you want to answer the question yourself or do you want me to..? Well then, let me answer. What rights? The ones that we have asked for in the Anandpur Sahib resolution.

Q: Not what the Akalis are asking for?

A: I didn't make the Anandpur Sahib resolution, it was our Akali brothers who did it.

Q: But now they are saying that they do not insist on the Anandpur Sahib resolution.

A: Who is saying it, the Sant? Has he said it to you?

Q: I've read statements.

A: Don't talk to me about statements. Anything can be written, you could go out and write Bhindranwale tried to shoot me? If Longowal tells you that he doesn't want the Anandpur Sahib resolution, tell him to say it in front of me.

Q: Do you really believe that Sikhs are being treated unjustly, that they

are being oppressed?

A: Do you need proof of this? Q: Well I, as a Sikh, have never felt

A: You haven't felt it, but I have. Write; I'll tell you. A Sikh girl was stripped naked and her father was forced to rape her. You say you're a Sikh, do you call this justice? This happened in village Kahlkhurd, Moga tehsil. The name of the father

was Jagmir Singh; he was a scheduled caste. Write on; a Sikh girl was stripped naked and paraded around Dao village, by policemen. Is this something that is done to Hindu girls?

Q: It has happened to Hindu girls

in other states.

A: I'm talking about Punjab. I'm talking about the Sikhs.

Q: No, what I mean is that the

police do this in...

A: You asked me about the Sikhs, I'm telling you (about them). They caught a Sikh granthi, and a Hindu policeman sat on him and smoked bidis and spat in his mouth and put tobacco in it. The name of the Sikh was Jasbir Singh, village Chupkiti, tehsil Moga. They caught another Sikh, and without finding anything on him, they cut his thigh, tore the flesh out and poured salt into the cut. Name: Jagir Singh, village Ittanwali, he lives in Moga. Is this not wrong? During the Asian Games they drew a line and said that anyone with Singh attached to his name couldn't go to Delhi at all. Did they stop anybody else? Is this not injustice to the Sikhs? Has anyone ever said that a *jenoi* (sacred thread) cannot be more than a particular length. Then why is there a measurement (limit) for the size of a kirpan? There are no restrictions on a Hindu religious symbol, why is there a restriction on our religious symbol? Is this not discrimination?

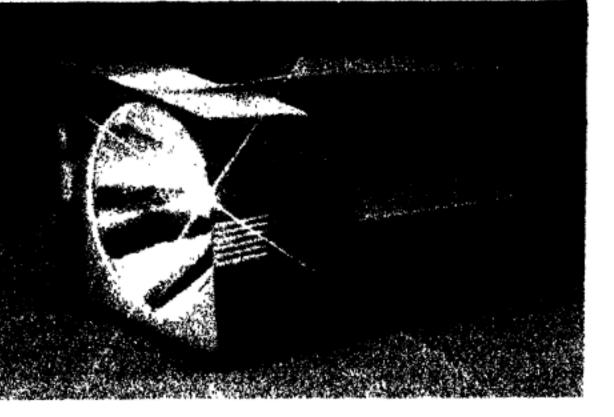
This woman born in a pandit's house, *Bibi* Indira Gandhi, was punished in 1977 for what she had done, by the Supreme Court and sent to Tihar Jail and her sympathisers like Pandey hijacked a plane, how much punishment were they given? They've been made MPs now, and if the Sat Guru Granth Sahib of the Sikhs is burnt and some Sikhs hijack a plane, why should they be exiled? Is this not an insult? You can hijack a plane for the daughter of these pandits and you get a place in the Assembly but if you do it for the isht of the Sikhs then Gurbax Singh's leg is cut off. If you do it for this daughter of pandits then it's patriotism, if you do it for the Sikh religion then, like in the case of Manjit Singh alias Museebat Singh, you are shot dead like he was on 20 August at Rajasanshi airport Ki sikhan di isht, Guru Granth Sahib di keemat ik bibi jini vi nahin reh gayee? Is this not an insult? During the Asian Games you showed pictures of masjids and mandirs on television but not one gurudwara. Is this not discrimination? During the Asian Games Hindus could





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Eveready Lanterns. The long-light brigade

come from America but not Sikhs. Is this not an insult?

Q: But that was probably because they were scared that you people would start your agitation again dur-

ing the Games...

A: I'll give you the answer, ask me about it—they are scared of the Sikhs, the Sikhs who, to free India, gave 93 heads whereas the topiwal-lahs only gave seven. That quom which gave 93 heads for the freedom of this country, why are they scared of those very people coming back today to that very land?

Q: They are afraid because of all

this talk of Khalistan...

A: Then they should stop only those people who talk about Khalistan.

Q: But the man who talks about Khalistan is living here in this building.

A: As who?

Q: Balbir Singh Sandhu.

A: So go and talk to him. Are you talking to me or to him?

Q: But all of you are protecting him.

A: Who says so? The newspapers.

Q: But when the government said give him to us,' all of you refused.

'give him to us,' all of you refused. A: The government is made of men, isn't it? Well, when we say give us those men who stripped our sisters naked, why don't they give them to us? Is there a separate law for us and a separate law for the government. It is the government's job to catch the guilty and bring them before a judge, and it is then up to the judge to decide whether to free him or not. Isn't that what the law says? Then where is it written that the police can get permission from the judge for a medical examination and then instead of doing that they take hot iron bars and shove them into the stomach, burn their foreheads and bhuno them with bullets while they are still in their custody. Which law gives the government the right to do this? Kulwant Singh Nagokey was killed like this. Jaswant Singh and Sukhdev Singh in Issathan had their stomachs burst open and the flesh pulled from their bodies with sticks, and their eyes taken out before being shot. Will they tell us what they found on them? What proof do they have against them? In India, since Independence, has a single Hindu gone to jail for trying to preserve Hinduism, for trying to make a Hindu state, for trying to keep the name of a train after a Hindu holy city, for trying to declare the Hindus a separate quom, for trying to get the Hindus to wear a jenoi? In these 36 years has any Hindu gone to jail for even one hour for this? But to get a Punjabi suba, to speak Punjabi, the Sikhs have had to send 57,000 people to jail and people like Kaka Inderjit Singh were kılled by the jats and thrown into a well. They got Haryana and Himachal for nothing; we send 57,000 people to jail, then they say the Sikhs are

extremists. If we want a train named



I am for peace, I believe there should be peace in the country.

after the Darbar Sahib and put a transmitter here to listen to kirtan...

Q: There are no transmitters in mandirs.

A: Do you want to listen to me or answer all the questions yourself? I'll tell you, you say you are a Sikh girl, then listen. To do all this and to get the Sikhs declared a separate quom, 100,000 have gone to jail and over 200 people have been martyred, and for this we are considered communal. Whereas they, have any of them been to jail to get a train named after a temple? Why aren't they communal? Now look at your newspapers, in all your newspapers you write about Sikh extremists. Why doesn't anyone write about Hindu extremists? At the same time they write that the Sikhs are a part of the Hindus. If this is true, and we are not even Sikhs, then why don't they say Hindu extremists when they are writing about our 'extremism.' If you insist on saying Sikh extremists then you must admit that we are a separate race. When it is extremism then we are different and when we ask for something then we become Hindus. What's the reason for this? Why is it that whenever they want they say we are extremists and whenever they want they say we are not Khalsas?

Q: I was trying to say that police atrocities happen with Hindus everywhere.

A: So it is the centre's police and our fight is with the centre.

Q: No, all I'm trying to say...
A: My fight is not with the Hindus, it's with the centre.

Q: No, but...

A: Listen to me. When that 80year-old Lala Jagat Narain was killed, his post-mortem took barely three days. On the 9th (September 1981) he dies, on the 12th there are warrants against me and on the 14th they looted two buses of the jatha which included Satguru's books and three lakhs worth of stuff and on the 16th, they give me the warrants. In which law is it written that you should burn the belongings and the isht of the person you suspect and then hand him the warrant. Lala Jagat Narain's body was given back to his son, Ramesh, by the police. They killed 18 of our men and didn't give us back a single body.

Q: But when you talk like this only about the Sikhs, when you talk of what happens in Punjab, you are creating hatred between the two

communities.

A: I'm not doing it, the government is. You say it is me, I say it's the government.

Q: Are not those who are leaving the state doing so because they are frightened, because they're scared of the Sikhs?

A: Who are they frightened of?

O: They are frightened of the

Q: They are frightened of the Sikhs.

A: Why are they frightened, have we killed any Hindus?

Q: Then why are they frightened? A:Ask those who are frightened. How can I answer it?

Q: I've heard that Sikhs have been threatening Hindus in some places.

A: You've heard that in Delhi, haven't you? Now that you are here, are you assured that I have not threatened you?

Q: Then why is there this talk of

leaving the Punjab?

A: Bibi, you should use your head, after all you must be intelligent to be working for a newspaper. Now if you got up and ran away from here and people started asking why you had run away, even if I hadn't been rude to you or threatened you or anything people would think I had, so it would

give us a bad name.

You must have read that we gave a slogan for Hindu-Sikh ekta (unity). Have you heard that any Hindus have called for Sikh-Hindu ekta? There was a Hindu sammelan (meeting) here and the slogans they shouted were 'Hindu-Hindu bhai bhai', 'Kacch, kada, kirpan, enoo bhejo Pakistan, dukki-tikki khehan nahin deni, sir they pagdee rahen nahin denei' You asked me about Khalistan; I neither support Khalistan, nor affi I against it (na himayat na virodhata). We want to stay with Hindustan, it is for the central government to decide whether they want us with them or not. This is the job of the centre, not mine. Yes, if they give us Khalistan, we will take it. We won't make the mistake of 1947. We are not asking for it but we'll take it if they give it to us. If. they want to put it in our jholi that's their business. But tell me, am I a

Khalistani or is the government? Why is it that only Sikh houses are set on fire in Punjab? Has a single Hindu's factory, house or shop been burnt?

Q: Some Hindu shops were burnt here in Amritsar.

A: I'm taking about the police, bibi, only Sikh boys have been thrown out of their jobs, only Sikhs have been arrested under MISA. Has it happened to any Hindus? And you tell me that there is no discrimination. A Sikh youth cannot be heir to his father's property till he is 17, but Shalli Ram and Tulli Ram own it from the minute they are born...

Q: This is the first time I've heard

of it...

A: Well, listen to it then, write what I'm telling you. You said you were a daughter of the Sikhs so you should know about the agony of the Sikhs. I told you in the beginning that things had happened in front of me, that you knew nothing of. In front of me a girl like you was stripped naked and her father was forced to rape her. If Sikhs want to go abroad they have to write that they had a Hindu marriage around a bedi not the Granth Sahib or they can't go abroad. Is this not discrimination. Why is it that a Sikh always has to give a glass full of blood to get a sip of water? Why is it we never get anything without sacrificing something? Take the case of Pavan Kumar, president of the Hindu Suraksha Samiti, Patiala zilla. They found 230 grenades in his house and he didn't go to jail even for an hour. Yes, he got one punishment: first he was the district president, now he has been made president for Punjab. If a Sikh doesn't even have empty cartridges, if he has only suspicion against him, they shoot him to death. Balwant Singh was sitting in a rickshaw and he was killed by Lajwant Singh, DSP. Gurmeet Singh's nails were pulled out and salt was put into the wounds, then his hands were held over candles and burnt. Then he was killed and they said he died in a police encounter. They say that the Sikhs are killing the police in encounters. Apart from Deheru Kand, have the police even been wounded? Where are the bullets that have been fired by the Sikhs? Had you heard of these things before? Tell me.

Q: I heard there had been some

torture.

A: Some, but not the rest. I'm telling you because you were so quick to say that you were a Sikh. Q: Haven't Hindu shops been burnt?

A: Have they got proof that it was the Sikhs who burnt them? Whatever I've told you, I have proof of...As for these shops, five of them belonged to Sikhs and three to Hindus. The blame was put on me, they said Bhindranwale had done it, yet when the culprits were caught they turned out to be from the Congress(I). Then there were these bomb explosions



We are not asking for Khalistan but we'll take it if the government gives it to us. If they want to put it in our jholi it is their business.

and again they blamed me, they sent out police dogs and the dogs went into the police station. They sent them out again and the dogs went and caught the leg of the thanedar, so they put the dogs into the jeep and said the dogs were wrong. Then when this Nirankari's house was damaged, they sent dogs out and this time they went into the house and caught the leg of the man whose house it was. If the dogs catch the police or the Nirankaris, they (the dogs) are wrong; if they catch one of our Singhs they are right. Jedi gov**ernment nu k**utteyan tey vishvas ai, kam kuttayan vallah hi karna, bandeyan wallah thodi karna (a government which trusts dogs, is going to act like dogs, not like men).

Q: If there are talks again would you like to participate if you are invited?

A: First let the government ask

me, then I'll answer that.

Q: How many of your men are in jail? A: The government knows more about it, since they are the ones who made the arrests...(pause). There are about 300 with 10 to 12 cases against each. This is not counting those arrested in the rasta roko. An Amritdhari Singh was caught by Bicchu Ram, thanedar, Sadar thana, Fazilka tehsil, Ferozepur zila. They shaved his beard and sent him back to me, saying go and tell Bhindranwale. Another thing that you said was that there were no transmitters in temples. A few months ago we got information that in Bombay, Calcutta, Kanpur and Benaras, there will be transmitters installed to broadcast the Vedas. How many Hindus have been to jail for this and they've already announced it.

Q: What can happen now? What is the solution?

A: Only the government can tell us; they can decide. Now suppose that you have rights and I refuse to give them to you and you demand them and I still refuse, what would you do? Wouldn't you try to get them back? Now what if I not only denied you your rights but also tried to make out that you were in some way to blame. This is what has happened. The government has taken our rights, we are asking for them back and they say we are extremists.

O: Do you believe that your life is in

Q: Do you believe that your life is in danger?

A: No.

Q: They say that you don't go out of here (Guru Nanak Nivas) because

you're too scared.

A: I don't go out because of the morcha. When it is over I will go out. No Sikh is afraid of dying, death is a game for a Sikh, there is a difference between a mere man and a Sikh. When you cut off a part of a man's body he screams with pain, when you do the same to a Sikh, he reads the bani (scriptures). If you cut off a man's head he dies, if you cut off a Sikh's head he walks three miles before dropping. The fourth Sant, in the taxal to which I belong, walked three miles after his head was cut off. And you ask me if I'm frightened of death.

Q: But do you believe that there is a

conspiracy to kill you?

A: Yes, there could be one. In fact there is one.

Q: If Darbara Singh is removed will it make a difference?

A: When he is removed, I will answer that.

Q: There's much talk of his being

removed...
A: If he had been removed earlier it would have made a difference.
Q: So when are you going to come

out of here (Guru Nanak Nivas)?

A: When our slavery ends, when

the morcha is a success.

Q: Now that you have come into politics, do you intend to stay or go back to the gurudwara?

A: When I haven't come into politics, where is the question of going

back?

Q: Isn't this politics?

A: It may be for you, but not for us. I am doing what I have always done; in the Sikh religion dharam and rajniti go together.

Q: What about economic issues? Does someone advise you on these?

A: We support the policies of the Akali Dal.

Q: They say that in the beginning you were given a lot of support and money by the Congress(I)?

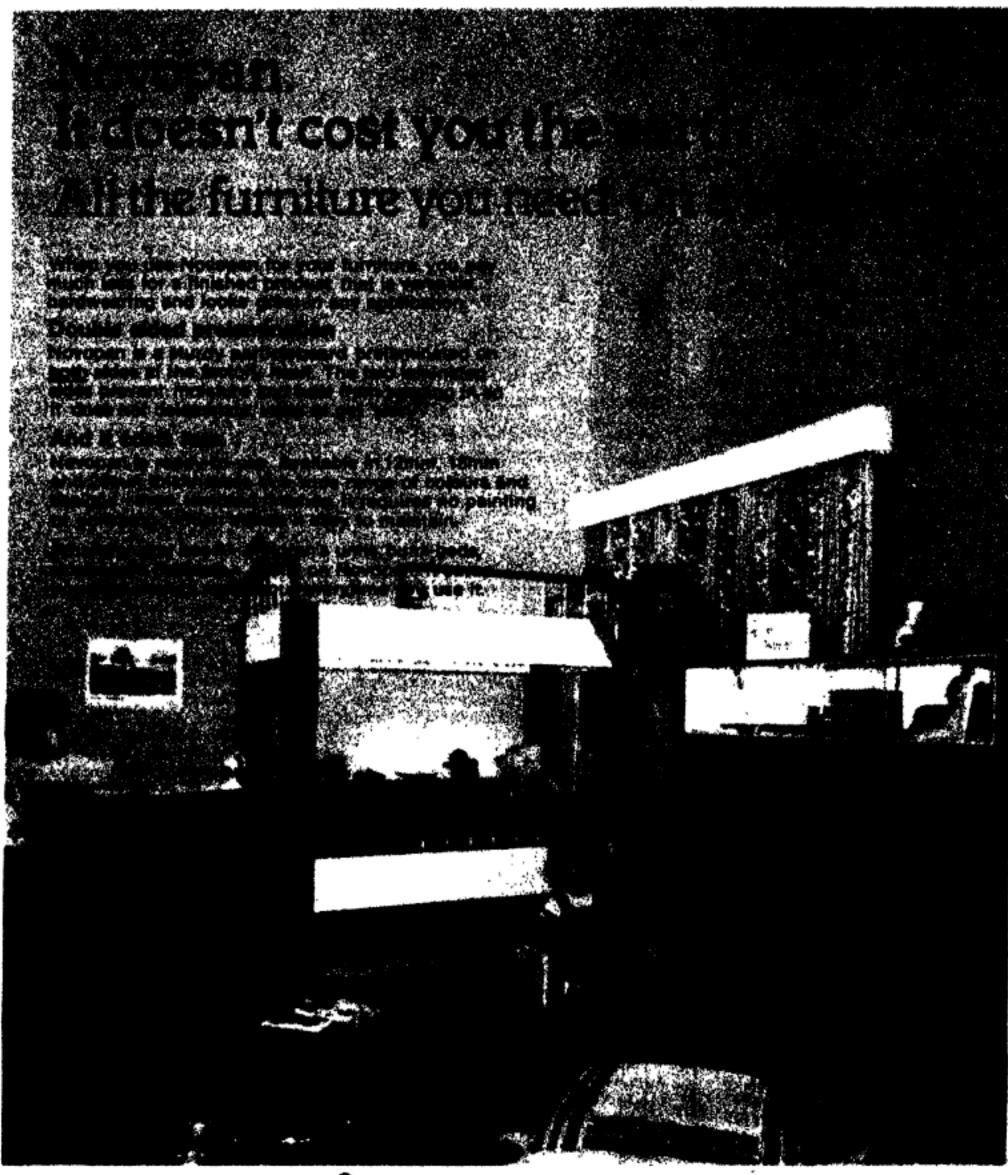
A: Tell us who in the Congress(I) gave us this support.

Q: They say it was Zail Singh.

A: Then ask him if he did.

Q: But you can say where you received it?

A: Why should I? You should ask the person who has given it.



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BIHAR Yet another tale of horror

In late April, members of the All India Revolutionary Forward Bloc, led by their chairman, Balmukund Rahi, undertook a padayatra through Gaya and Aurangabad areas in Bihar. But they could not proceed very far, for at Karma village they were attacked by extremists. Balmukund Rahi and another party worker were cold-bloodedly beheaded. A testimony to the lawlessness and police indifference that continues unabated in the state. NIRAJ ROY reports on the heinous crime and the events leading up to it.

ne of the most gruesome sights met the residents of Patna on 27 April. A procession was taken out, with two people holding up the severed heads of Mr Balmukund Rahi, chairman of the All India Revolutionary Forward Bloc and a party worker, Mr Chandra Deo Yadav. Slogans were being shouted by the processionists that justice be given promptly for this brutal action. Mr Rahi and Mr Yadav had been beheaded on 25 April in Karma village of Gaya district.

The genesis of this tragedy goes back some years. In 1978, Mr Balmukund Rahi of the Forward Bloc.

broke away and formed his own party, calling it the Revolutionary Forward Bloc (RFB). Much before this, during the late Sixties when Balmukund Rahi was editing the Poorvi Times from Gorakhpur, he had made his sympathies with the Naxalite movement in Bihar quite clear However, he later totally opposed their theory of annihilation as well as their practice of burning religious books and destroying idols. He is said to have had a considerable following among the small and medium farmers of some villages in Gaya and Aurangabad. It is also said that, for obvious reasons, some of the big landlords too were receptive to

his arguments. His party, however, claimed the support of the landless workers.

In both Gaya and Aurangabad, a bitter struggle is being waged by the landless labourers against the landowners. The extremist group of the Vinod Mishra faction and the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) have been very active in these areas and have succeeded in organising the landless labourers against the landowners' exploitation. In this fight, the landowners too have raised their own armed groups to counter the extremists. These are groups like the Bhumi Sena, the Brahm Rishi Sena and the Rana and Kunwar Sena, based on

Party workers holding the severed heads of Balmukund Rahi and Chandra Deo Yaday: a demand for justice



caste lines. Armed conflict, resulting in a lot of deaths, has been carrying on for a long time between these two groups. The police, as has been their tradition, have tried to crush the extremists while turning a blind eye to the growth of the privately owned armed groups of the landowners.

It was in such an atmosphere that Balmukund Rahi and his All India Revolutionary Forward Bloc workers organised a padayatra through the Gaya and Aurangabad areas. The administration was aware of Mr Rahi's padayatra programme. In fact, thousands of posters and pamphlets had been pasted and distributed by the party workers. Balmukund Rahi, who lived in a rented house in Lohanipur, Patna, joined the padayatra on the second day at Neohra village and then led his group for 24 km. On the way, he gave speeches at Manjhiwar and Korab, where he questioned the extremists theory of individual annihilation. He is reported to have asked, "Is it possible to build a people's movement on the selfishness of only one group or class of society?" His speeches and the slogans which warned the people about the "terrorists" ("Terrorism murdabad;" "Peaceful people of the world unite.)", were certainly provocative.

On 25 April, the group of some 200 padayatris stopped at Gurarau, where too Balmukund Rahi and some of their leaders addressed a public meeting. After this, in keeping with their schedule, the padayatris moved on and reached Karma village where they halted for the night. The group settled down in an open field in front of the house of a party worker, Ram Ratan Yadav. Karma is a fairly prosperous village of the Yadavs. (In fact, Ram Ratan Yadav himself owns more than 20 bighas of land.) And the activities of the extremists in and around this village are at their peak. Perhaps, Mr Balmukund Rahi's venturing into Karma at this point in time was, therefore, interpreted as a direct

challenge.

According to Mr D. S. Nirala, a senior Revolutionary Forward Bloc functionary who was present there, their group was informed that some people were assembling on the southern side of the village. However, they ignored this, thinking that it was probably a regular MCC night procession. At around nine pm, suddenly, there was a loud explosion followed by a lot of slogan shouting "MCC zindabad" rent the air and i no time the *padayatris* were sur rounded by armed people saying, "I all of you do not surrender, then you will all be killed." When the mukhia of Khagina village, Shatrughan Thakur, came forward, lathi blows rained on him from all directions. Mr D.S. Nirala says that the shooting soon started and they could see their colleagues falling to the bullets.

The Revolutionary Forward Bloc



The gruesome procession: unparalleled lawlessness

group then decided to split into three. Two of these tried to force their way out of the violent chaos. Only one group succeeded and the other was taken to another part of the village and placed under armed guard. The third group, which included Balmukund Rahi, decided to hide in the house of Ram Ratan Yadav. But the house was soon surrounded and set on fire, forcing those hiding inside to come out. The rest of the events were narrated by Shambhu Prasad, another party functionary present there. He said, "Four of us, including Mr Mahindergiri, Rahiji and Chandra Deo Yaday, crawled to a haystack and hid behind it. The attackers kept their fire directed at us and kept shouting, "We have not got Rahi yet." Mahindergiri and Chandra Deo Yadav tried to escape but the latter was caught. Rahiji and I were left alone, when I silently crawled into a small hut and hid there in the darkness. Just after a little while, I heard them dragging Rahiji away."

Mr Nirala then saw the attackers bring his leader, Balmukund Rahi. He had been stripped to his underpants and was being beaten constantly, no matter how much he tried to tell them that he was willing to talk to their leader. Said Mr Nirala, "They then came and told us to get

out and threatened us that if we dared to file police cases against them, we too would meet the same fate. After that they dragged Mr Rahi and Chandra Deo Yadav away. We reached the Gurarau police station at ten pm and tried to tell the police about the attack but they did not take us seriously. Then one of us used the railway telephone to pass a message to the Gaya railway station of the attack, from where it was relayed to the residence of the superintendent of police, Mr Naseem Ahmed."

Meanwhile, the second group had reached the police station at 11 pm. One of the party functionaries, Mr Shambhu Prasad, was still hiding in the hut and he came out only when a police party of five reached the spot. According to Shambhu Prasad, "The police party and I went towards the eastern side of the village in pursuit of my leader and other colleagues. Hardly a kilometre away, we discovered the two severed heads of our comrades. I nearly fainted."

When Mr Nirala was asked why they had risked their lives and that of other party workers by undertaking a padayatra into an area dominated by extremists, he said that they "had been assured of police protection which, unfortunately, did not come."

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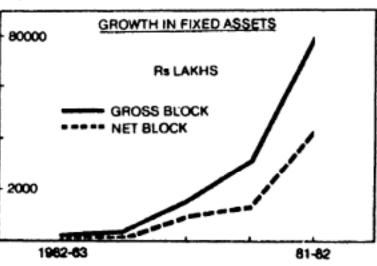
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West Indies vs Amarnath

ASHIS RAY reviews the India-West Indies series

one are the days when Sunil Gavaskar and Gundappa Viswanath were the sole saving grace of Indian batting. There has emerged, now, a new hero, a man as brave and effective as anyone, and a person who, since 'Vishy' is out of the scene and his brother-in-law not as prolific as he used to be, has had to carry the mantle of the two masters almost entirely on his own. One wonders, in fact, what would have happened to Indian cricket had Mohinder Amarnath not been part of the side in Pakistan and the West Indies. The second son of Lala Amarnath, who 49 years ago had the honour of scoring India's first Test century, "Jimmy" as Mohinder Amarnath is popularly known, spent virtually four years in the wilderness before being recalled. And when he did return, he notched up three 100s in Pakistan, in what was one of the most harrowing series ever for Indian batsmen, with Imran Khan's deliveries curving in and out baffling the batsmen. Mohinder, promoted to number three in the batting order, headed the aggregates for the six Tests with 584 runs averaging 73.50. As for the current series, after four Tests he has scored more runs than anyone on either side with a tally of 428 and his average of 61.4 is the best among both teams.

Lala Amarnath was an exceptional batsman, but suffered from a lack of big match temperament. Indeed, some oldtimers after watching Mohinder master the most dreaded pace quartet in the game are not § convinced that his style is as good as his illustrious father's. It being two 💃 vastly different eras, comparisons can be highly erroneous. But even so, on the evidence of the son's display since his comeback, it is hard to believe that Lalaji was at any stage better than him. And Mohinder is more than equal to the mental pressures of Test cricket. Admittedly, the war years robbed his father of a crucial phase of development, but while one of the attacks he encountered, namely the Australian team under Donald Bradman in 1947-48 was quite outstanding, the West Indians faced by Mohinder are probably more dangerous and extremely unrelenting.

He, undoubtedly, harboured a problem but this was largely one of being too compulsive and daring

about the hook. His first movement was (and still is) forward, which quite often had him inventing an incorrect swing over his shoulder in order to negotiate the rising ball on the leg stump or just outside it. Banished, he did a reappraisal of his technique. He discussed it with his father---whom he loves and respects very much—and decided to switch to an open stance, which, whether he was on the front foot or back, would find him squarer to the ball, and thus, in the perfect position to hook. And he, also, reconciled himself to the helmet, which restored his confidence. More important it did not affect his strokes in the arc between mid-on and third man, for he met the deliveries for such shots side-on, particularly the drive.

India had lost the opening Test by six wickets, and at Port of Spain (the second Test) had the misfortune of batting first on a moist and grassy wicket after losing the toss. But Mohinder was at hand with a half century, which, though not enough to avoid an embarrassing total, at least prevented a complete surrender. Then came a predictably big score by the West Indies, and a battle commenced to save the match. The majority thought only Gavaskar could ensure a draw—this being the great man's reputation in the Caribbean—but he departed for 32, and

so, the burden fell once again on the man in form Mohinder soon took command and defied the marauding quickies for five and three quarter hours to post 117 runs. Kapil Dev, followed with an unbeaten 100 but the bulk of his runs came after India were no longer threatened. The main credit, therefore, for not going two down in the series belonged to Mohinder, and as a reflection of this, he won the Man of the Match award.

The next stop on the tour was Guyana where in a rain-ruined match against the territory, the Delhi captain produced yet another whirlwind century Mohinder failed to distinguish himself in the other two matches in this leg of the visit, the other two getting 30 and 13 in the second one-day international (which India won) and the third Test respectively. As it transpired, however, this was a brief lull before a storm surfacing at the home of West Indian cricket: the little island of Barbados.

India's record in the land of three Ws-Worrel, Weekes and Walcott-and the greatest of them all Sir Gary Sobers, is dismal. In four previous Tests at the Kensington Oval, in Bridgetown, starting from 1953, India had lost three, and drawn the other. This being the background, Mohinder's objective was, quite clearly, to wipe out this unenviable blot in India's cricket history.

Madan Lal curls up in the air before he sends down one to Haynes who scored 92 at Barbados



In the first-class fixture at Barbados preceeding the fourth Test, India were again in deep trouble, with an innings defeat staring them on the face. But Mohinder, who had got a half century in the first innings, came to the rescure once more. He was bothered by a groin strain, and would have liked to avoid batting in the second innings, if he could help it. But there was no option and walking in eventually, after the seventh wicket had tumbled, he notched up an unbeaten 100 to haul India out of the crisis, to an honourable draw. But the assignment was more difficult in the Test, and despite a gallant endeavour, he did not succeed in averting defeat, which gave the West Indies a winning twonil lead in the series—there being just one Test to be played.

In the first outing in the fourth Test, Mohinder carved out a superb 91 as India slumped to 209 all out. And in the second, in spite of being hit on the upper lip by a bouncer from Malcolm Marshall, to which he had hooked too early, he stood like a monolith amidst shambles till he was the last man out for a memorable 80. The pitch was, in fact, more suitable for fast bowling in the first innings, when India were put in to bat after Kapil Dev lost the toss for the fourth successive time in the series. The conditions demanded batsmanship of the highest quality, and Mohinder provided it, which irrespective of a maiden Test hundred by the Trinidadian Augustine Logie, won him the man-of-the-match prize for the second time in four Tests.

As Everton Weekes remarked "the important thing is not that he is two-eyed in his stance, but the fact that he's always across to the pitch of the ball when going forward. And he's got to be the most successful hooker in the game today." Mohinder probably never heard this for



Amarnath: unassuming

he's a quiet sort of person, who does not meet too many people. He resembles his mother, and has, perhaps, inherited this introvertive streak from her. But that does not make him snobbish or unfriendly, only pleasantly taciturn, indeed, he must be having a quiet laugh to himself at the expense of the selectors who kept him out of Test cricket for such a long time.

Mohinder has reason to be bitter about being kept in the cold for as long as he was, but he's not one to hold grudges, and even if he did, he wouldn't show it. "Maan," Vivian Richards told him, "you must have played really well to get three centuries in Pakistan." He was referring to how difficult it is for visiting players to get runs in Pakistan. Mohinder smiled, pleased at such a compliment being showered on him by the man reckoned to be the leading batsman in modern times. Indeed, after the Barbados Test, Richards reached the conclusion that Mohinder is the best batsman ever to have handled the present four-pronged West Indian pace attack, with such dexterity. A significant statement, this, for it takes into account players like Greg Chappel, Kim Hughes, Geotfrey Boycott, Graham Gooch, David Gower, Javed Miandad, and of course Sunil Gavaskar.

The dead fifth Test at Antigua, throbed with life-scorewise. The pitch was as lifeless as wood and it was centuries galore. Mohinder displaying the type of consistency that has seldom been seen in modern cricket followed up his 54 in the first innings with a scintillating 116 which got him the Man-of-the-Series award. In reply to India's seemingly unassailable total of 457 (aided by Shastri's century and two near centuries by Kapil and Vengsarkar), the West Indies whiplashed their way to 550. For the fifth time in the history of Test cricket, four players-Lloyd, Dujon, Greenidge and Hayneshammered centuries in an innings.

The incredible threat posed by the West Indian fast bowlers in recent years, could very soon be a thing of the past. Andy Roberts, firing away for the last nine years, is 32, and is menacingly fast, only occasionally. Indeed, at present he is more wily than frightening. Michael Holding is 29, and apart from being as speedy as he used to be, or shall we say unrelentingly so, is clearly hampered by a knee problem. And the six foot eight inch Joel Garner, the man with uncanny control, a steep bounce and a toe-crushing yorker is plagued by a shoulder Three among their quickie-quartet are sliding downhill. Only Marshall looks a truly dangerous operator. He has velocity, he has variation and what is commonly called the killer instinct.

Only a few weeks ago, the West Indies could have called upon the services of either Sylvester Clarke or Colin Croft, if not both. But these two really lethal performers, having undertaken a recent tour of South Africa, have not merely ruled themselves out of Test cricket for ever, but will not be allowed to participate in first-class cricket in these territories, either. This is a tragic loss for Caribbean cricket, and among the up and coming players, it has only Winston Davis of the Windward Islands to fall back upon.

Though, defeated, India can go for the World Cup in June with neverbefore confidence, strengthened by that memorable victory in the oneday international. And apart from the blossoming of Ravi Shastri into a dependable allrounder (his dogged century in the last Test showed how much he has matured) there is very little India has to gloat about. None of the three teenagers-Gursharan Singh, Maninder Singh or Sivramakrishnan-lived upto expectations and it will be sometime before their transformation into top class players occurs. The draft-and-discard procedure will continue.

One old war horse faces another: Lloyd square cuts Venkataraghavan on his way to a half century at Kensington Oval





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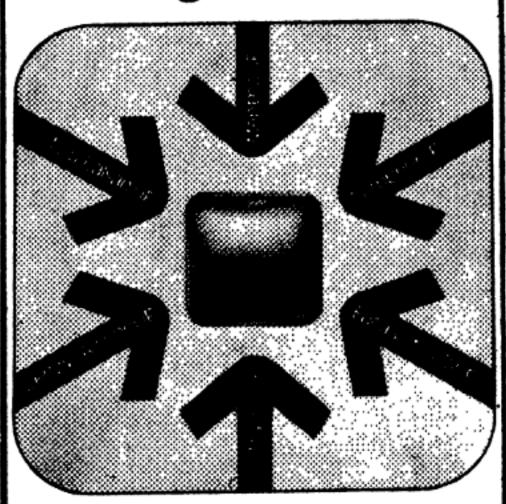
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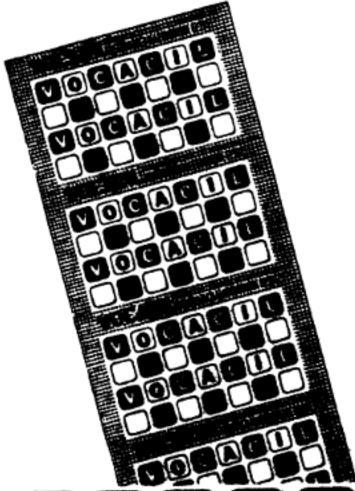
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What is happening to Chavan?



Few people are aware of the nebulous political position of Mr Y. B. Chavan. Though he is the chairman of the 8th Finance Commission, courtesy Mrs Indira Gandhi, he has still not been admitted into the Congress(I). Mr Chavan, once the undisputed Congress leader of Maharashtra can now attend only the parliamentary party meetings since he is a sort of

associate member of the Congress parliamentary party. The Maratha community is painfully aware of it and see in it a sinister move to wipe out Mr Chavan after the 1985 elections. He is a Member of Parliament from Satara and since he has not been admitted as a full fledged member, Mrs Gandhi is not bound to give him a ticket from Satara parliamentary constituency in the next election. She perhaps has plansto build up a new Maratha leadership in Satara, which will be loyal to the Nehru family. Mr Chavan is said to be very perturbed about this and has sounded people inside and outside the Congress(I). A preemptive move by him at this stage could lead to only further political anonymity which both the Kashmiri and Punjabi clique at 1 Safdarjung Road would relish.

AP police administration may be overhauled

The entire police administration in Andhra Pradesh is likely to be reorganised soon. The need for this has been felt primarily because of the dacoity menace and increasing threats to law and order. As part of the reorganisation plans, police commissioners will be appointed in cities like Vijayawada and Vishakapatnam and also in Ranga Reddy district that adjoins Hyderabad city. According to Mr Sreekanth Reddy, the police commissioner, Hyderabad, most of the dacoities take place in Ranga Reddy district. What is even more interesting is Mr Reddy's disclosure that most of the dacoities are being committed by gangs belonging to other states.

The mysterious case of the Bombay Dyeing shares

Close on the heels of the buying up of the equity shares of Delhi Cloth Mills and Escorts Ltd, there has been an upsurge of interest in the shares of Larsen and Toubro and Mahindra and Mahindra. The interest in these two companies is understandable but the surprise element in the shopping list of non-resident buyers is the Bombay Dyeing shares, the market value of which plummetted from Rs 70 to Rs 60 recently. Moreever the combined issues of convertible and non-convertible bonds of this company had failed to evoke the expected response. Why then, the rush for buying the Bombay Dyeing shares? Is it because someone is desperately trying to takeover the management of Bombay Dyeing?

AP, TN opposition critical of the Krishna waters accord

The corrosive power of politicking is evident from the unjustified criticism levelled against the chief ministers of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh for signing the Krishna waters accord. What is ironic is that the criticism comes from cavillers in their respective states. The DMK chief M Karunanidhi on the one hand claims that MGR was 'tricked' into the agreement by NTR. NTR's critics, mainly the Congress(I), have been accusing him of bartering away the interests of Telugu farmers merely to keep 'big brother' happy. MGR insists on calling NTR thambi (younger brother) and NTR calls MGR anna (elder brother). Several Telugu Desam legislators of Cuddapah district have come up with an embarassing allegation that Mr N. Srinivasu Reddy, minister for works, is diverting Krishna water meant for Rayalseema district to Nellore district because he has 'vested interests' there.

The Reddys are getting ready for a revival

The powerful Reddy community of Andhra Pradesh, which has steadily been losing political and social dominance is now mustering strength for a revival. The Congress(I) is trying its best to take advantage of the situation and has started making attempts to convince the Reddy community to unite against the increasing strength of the Khammas. The first steps in this direction have already been taken in Hyderabad. Former union minister Brahmananda Reddy had a long-awaited meeting with the Prime Minister in New Delhi recently. Dr Chenna Reddy who resigned as Governor of Punjab recently had several rounds of discussions about this before taking off on a three-month foreign tour.

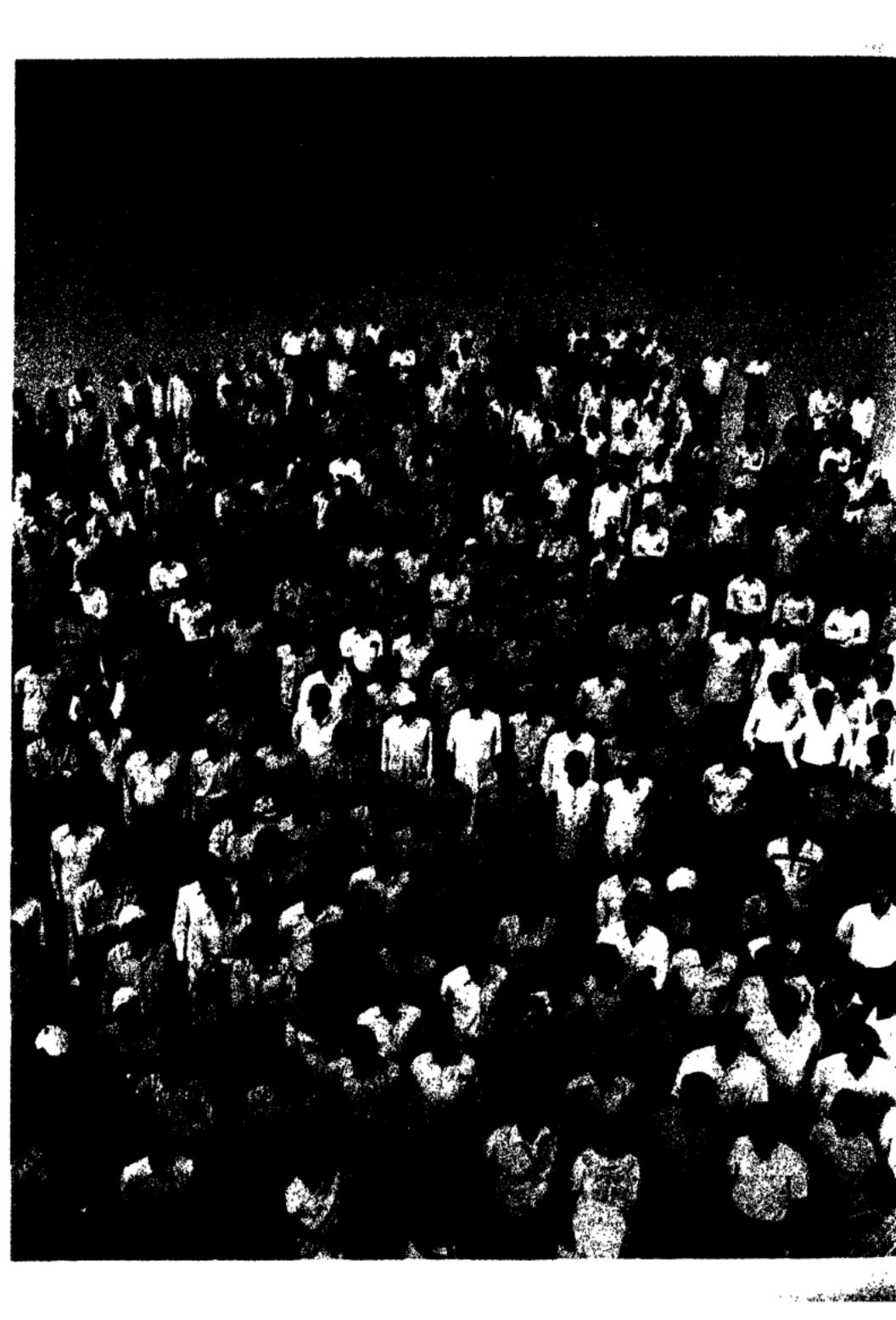
Anjaiah's way of being in the news



Anjaiah

One must admit that T. Anjaiah performs his self-appointed role as court jester of Andhra Pradesh politics to perfection. At regular intervals he provides comic relief to the otherwise ascetic atmosphere by saying or doing something absurd. His latest is the sobriquet that he has coined for the chief minister N T Rama Rao, the yogic CM of Andhra Pradesh. According to

Mr Anjaiah, NTR is becoming more and more inaccessible to the public and has turned into a rigid disciplinarian. As an asectic, NTR has renounced non-vegetarian food and therefore Anjaiah feels that the epithet that best suits him is 'Vegetarian Khomeini' Reacting to NTR's decision to sell the state-owned helicopter Mr Anjaiah remarked that dignitaries could in future use 'hero cycles'. The comment is a double-edged dig at the Telugu Desam party symbol as well as NTR's celluloid past.



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'There might be a mid-term poll next year'

Ramakrishna Sarathy reads the stars, palms and faces of the most powerful people—not only from India but from all over the world. Just a few weeks ago a prediction he had made about a comparatively unknown man in 1981 came true—when Bob Hawke became Prime Minister of Australia. At the recent Non-Aligned Summit there was heavy demand for his services. MADHU JAIN met him recently in his office in Delhi to record what Mr Sarathy said would be his last interview for a very long time.

When you enter Mr Ramakrishna Sarathy's clinically white and clean little office in New Delhi's Ashok Hotel, it is like going into some kind of zone of tranquillity. Competing with the blank white walls is the soothsayer himself in his startlingly white dhoti and chador and fresh-from-a-bath look.

In fact, his translucent eyes over which the eyelids seldom come down, and the slightly droning voice and reassuring manner make the client feel that they are sitting across a palmist, psychoanalyst rolled into one. Mr Sarathy's clients visit the astropalmist as much for peeping into their futures as his telling them how to get on with their lives—whether it is filmmaker Federico Fellini or any of the politicians and industrialists of this country, or

ambassadors and royalty of others. Mr Sarathy says that he is right only 70 per cent of the time. It is the human factor which counts in the accuracy of his prediction. When that elusive sixth sense does not work, Mr Sarathy often tells the client to go home and come back again. For, Mr Sarathy does not only look at the palms or casts and study horoscopes. He reads faces, does a bit of numerology and is a tantric as well. When the muse is at work, Mr Sarathy can be devastatingly right. So right that he often surprises himself as well.

In July 1981, Mr Sarathy had all the senses at work. A team of Australian TV journalists led by Mr Bruce Standard handed him a sheaf of photographs and asked him to pick the man most likely to become Prime Minister. Mr Sarathy took a very short time before he held up Bob Hawke's photograph. "This man," he said (for Australia's 60 Minutes programme screened on channel 9, "could become Prime Minister by the end of 1982 or early 1983." Mr Hawke did become the Prime Minister in March 1983, surprising many

of the political pundits. This film was screened again on Australian television after Mr Hawke's victory.

Not many in India would have even heard of Mr Hawke, with, as Mr Sarathy puts it "the lucky dimple on his cheek." (A dimple elsewhere is not necessarily lucky—and a dimple on the chin below a crooked nose does not auger too well.) Not only did Mr Sarathy choose the winner, (he showed me the video film of this 20-minute programme), but he went on to say which of the political personalities had a chance, and who were the runners-up.

Next in line came Mr Hayden, who Mr Sarathy had said would perhaps share power with Mr Hawke. The former was actually the leader of the opposition. He stepped down shortly before the elections were held earlier this year. Mr Sarathy was dead

right: Mr Hayden is now Australia's number two in the political hierarchy. For the former Prime Minister, Mr Malcolm Fraser, the astropalmist did not see too many nice things: Mr Fraser would have health problems and lose. Mr Fraser was operated upon later

upon later.

Interestingly enough, this film was probably intended as one of the stereo-typed ones about the exotic, mysterious East. The opening shot is of a snake-charmer and the swaying snake. The next shot is the astropalmist. But somewhere between the conception of this film made in the realist outback and its execution, fell the shadow of Mr Sarathy's considerable powers of perception and charm. The film took a detour. Then Mr Stannard goes on to say how surprised he was when Mr Sarathy told him details about his life that he could possibly not have known.

Ramakrishna Sarathy with his family



mong Mr Sarathy's more notable A successful predictions was Mrs Gandhi's spell of bad luck. In 1979. in an interview published on 9 December 1979, he had said that the planetary combinations were very bad for Sanjay Gandhi until July 1980: He had earlier that year predicted in his horoscope book for Scorpios that Mrs Gandhi could lose somebody close to her. In fact, as far back as 1972, Mr Sarathy had told the Italian journalist Dr Rosana Zerelli that Mrs Gandhi could lose power in February 1977. The Italian journalist's article appeared with this information in the daily Amica on 2 January 1977. "I was wrong by a month this time. And earlier I had said that Mrs Gandhi would come back to power in September 1980; there I was wrong by over six months," says Mr Sarathy.

Mr Sarathy thinks that his perceptions are now clearer. The astropalmist was in a way born into his present profession, although he is now contemplating gradually retiring from soothsaying and going into business, something he enjoys and feels he has a tlair for, since a vital part of good business is to know what other people are really thinking.

Mr Sarathy's father, Mr Ramamurty, who now lives in Madras, used to read the pages of the Brighu Samihita in Madras. "My father taught me two very important things: how powerful the mind really was and how important cleanliness is. He touched my head when I was born, maybe that gave me some powers...I

don't know..."

The proof of Mr Sarathy's international success is the fact that during the recent Non-Aligned Summit, there was quite a rush at Mr Sarathy's home and office. The NAM total: four heads of state (two at home, two at the Ashok Hotel-Mr Sarathy refused to go to their suites), several wives of heads of state, many foreign ministers and ambassadors. Mr Sarathy is discreet about who the visitors were. But it is quite clear that what they wanted really to know was how long they would remain in power. This question was top priority. The next worrying concern was how they should deal with their enemies, who they were and how they ought to be tackled. The wives of the heads of state were mainly worried about the security of their husbands. Interestingly most of the number Twos wanted to know when they would reach the "top position" in their respective countries—that is, replace their present bosses.

Mr Sarathy does not have to actually see a person to predict his future. Often a photograph tells him a few things. For instance, Mr Yasser Arafat, the chairman of the PLO, will only achieve partial success, according to Mr Sarathy. "His eyes are bright but there is no glow in the face. He is an unselfish man, a

giving man...just look at those eyes...

Mr Sarathy also carries on a correspondence with some of his clients. Buckminister Fuller and Federico Fellini, the Italian filmmaker are quite regular correspondents.

The Italian maestro regularly consults him about the films he is making. Interestingly enough, Mr Sarathy had told Mr Fellini that he should not make City of Women. At that time Mr Fellini had to choose between two films. The soothsaver was right: the music director died half way through the making of the film, a male lead committed suicide, the director had trouble finding the money for the film-eventually he turned to France for the money. And the coup de grace: many of the critics panned this film. It was as Fellini was to describe it later in a letter to Mr Sarathy, "one of the most heavy and exhausting films I have ever done..."

Mr Fellini at one stage had even thought of moving to America but stayed on in Italy because "I feel a very strong resistance to start a new life in such an extraordinary country as the US and try to tell of it. It seems to me like an impossible, overpowering attempt for a human being. It would be like expecting a newborn baby to speak, to express himself, and to give his impressions on what he feels and thinks of the life he has started...Maybe this similitude is slightly exaggerated, emphatical, but in any case I believe there to be some truth in it, and this is enough to keep me from taking the

leap...'

What does the future hold for Mrs Gandhi? A: Nothing extraordinary will happen to Mrs Gandhi during the next two-and-a half years. Her bad cycle is now over. There might be a few ups and downs but they will even out. She does look weak and might have minor health problems, but she also has extraordinary willpower. Mars is in the Lord of her House, and this has given her so much energy. Saturn has also been in an exalted position since October 1982; this has brought her into the world picture. Others have now accepted her as a world leader. Internationally she has reached quite high. This will continue until July 1983 and then the peak will turn into a plateau.

O: Will there be a mid-term poll? A: There might be one next year,

but I am not sure.

Q: Will she survive politically? A: Saturn has entered Surya where the House of Mars is placed. She will have to be careful about this. One spell of bad luck ended in June 1980. And in late 1982 came another period of bad luck when the Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka were ordered; it has ended for the time being.



Mrs Gandhi: Saturn has entered Surya where the House of Mars is placed. She will have to be careful about this.

Q: And Mr Rajiv Gandhi?

A: I was on the same flight as Mr Gandhi recently, and could observe him. His face is coming up. There is brightness. It used to be dull, expressionless. These days the eyes move, they are no longer fixed. He is picking up things, jyoti is coming up. Previously, I did not comment on him.

Q: What about opposition leaders?

Who has a bright future?

A: Mr Chandra Shekhar has a good hand—although he does not have the exact date of his birth. He will always be in the limelight, the public eye. Mr Subramaniam Swamy has a glow on his face; he might go far. Political personalities like Mr Morarji Desai and Mr Charan Singh will not return to the limelight.

Q: What about Atal Behari Va-

jpayee?

A: The seven-and-a-half-year cycle of bad luck has started for him. His health will not be good, he might have high blood pressure and might require an operation—kidneys perhaps. George Fernandes will still be on the scene; his efficiency and powers of concentration are good. Babu Jagjivan Ram is still around and might get back into power one of these days. The lines on his hand are good, although he has a dot on the palm which denotes a weakness of

Q: What about the leaders in our neighbouring countries? How stable

are they?

A: There will be considerable changes in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. In 1985 or late 1984 the seven-and-a-half-year cycle of bad luck will begin for General Zia of Pakistan. He also has dreamy eyes. People with such eyes do not always meet a peaceful end. In Bangladesh and Sri Lanka the changes might begin after October this year. Mrs Bandaranaike's stars are getting brighter. And so are those of Mr Kamal Hossain and Mr Samad Azad.



Rajiv Gandhi: There is brightness on his face now. It used to be dull, expressionless.

Those who were present around 1975, Mr Mujibur Rahman's people, will come into prominence.

Q: What will happen in Afghanistan? Will the Soviets withdraw?

A: Normalcy will prevail by the end of this year or next year. The problem will be resolved.

O: What is going to happen in

Europe this year?

A: In Italy, there will be changes in leadership, although the same party will continue. In France, there are not likely to be any significant changes. In the UK, there will be changes at the end of next year. Mrs Thatcher will face two no-confidence motions. The British Prime Minister will scrape through. I had said in 1979 (the Daily Mail published this) that two of her ministers would

When will the Iran-Iraq war

end?

A: At the end of this year.

Q: What about the Soviet Union? How long will Mr Andropov last? He is said to be ill.

A: Two more leaders will be changed before 1988. They don't give Mr Andropov's date of birth, but my feeling is that he will not last long. In 1985, there will be changes in Netherlands. The health of Queen Juliana will cause anxiety in 1985-86.

Q: And Queen Elizabeth of Great

Britain?

A: She is strong. But Prince Charles will come in the limelight quite soon. In Argentina, Mr Peron's party will make a headway in the coming elections.

Q: What about President Ronald

Reagan of the USA?

A: He is going strong. There will be no problem for some time. I can't yet say anything about the chances of other candidates for the Presidential elections.

Q: Coming back to India, will another Emergency be imposed?

Q: What about the economic



Chandra Shekhar: A good hand. He will always be in the limelight.

health of the country?

A: I think that it will be the time for economic recovery. I see the palms of many businessmen. Their hands are good. There are signs of expansion. There are many trishuls on the hands of many businessmen. There will be a lot of development. I know what I am saying does not sound right since economists are painting another picture. The expor-ters have good palms as well, although, of course, there will be many problems.

O: Will Mr Amitabh Bachchan

eventually enter politics?

A: Yes, he will. But he also has the dreamy eyes that General Zia has, He is prone to accidents.

Q: How successful will Mr N. T.

Rama Rao be?

A: Maybe not for very long. He should be careful about his health. He has also to be cautious while travelling: there could be an accident.

Q: And Mr M. G. Ramachandran, the chief minister of Tamil Nadu?

A: He is allright. He will be around for some time.

Q: What about the world at large? A: It is going to be a very difficult time for all of us for the next three years. In April we are entering into a bad phase. The next three years will be those of bloodshed. Rudrodhkari and rakthakshi. Power will be sought through violence, hence the bloodshed.

Q: Will there be a nuclear holocaust? There is now much talk about this.

A: No, all this will be done through conventional warfare: guns and tanks. If there were to be a nuclear war, there would be no bloodshed, just ashes.

Q: How accurate are your predictions?

A: I would say that I am wrong 30 per cent of the time. You know there are so many weaknesses in astrology. We can also be biased. Nobody has



Atal Behari Vajpayee: Seven-and-a-half year cycle of bad luck has started.

predicted as to what will happen for the next 20 years. For instance, nobody had said that Sanjay Gandhi would be lost and Mrs Gandhi would come to power, lose it and then regain it. Sometimes we don't want to see so many things. For example, if I saw something bad about my son, I would try to ignore it. I would like to protect him.

O: What would you say would be your most accurate and most important prediction. Something which

surprised you as well.

A: I would say the prediction about Mr Bob Hawke coming to power. I was shown over half-a-dozen photographs in 1981 by an Australian TV team which came to India. I did not know who was were or what parties they belonged to. And I picked Mr Hawke's photograph and said that he had the best chances. I also picked the photograph of the man who had the next best chances. This was Mr Hayden who dropped out as opposition leader a little before the national elections in Australia in March. I had also said that Mr Malcolm Fraser would have problems with his health. The other prediction which was very accurate was about the birth of Bangladesh. I had even predicted the timings of the war: when it would start and end, and I had told Mr Samad in mid-1971 that he would be the foreign minister of the new country which would be born after a lot of struggle.

Q: Would you say that astrology is more than a science, that intuition plays an important part in it as well?

A: Well, sometimes I have flashes of insight and I write it down. But my main approach is to first get the profession of the client. If I can't know that, how can I proceed further? Then I tell him about his past, to see if I am right. After that I move to the future.

Q: You also read faces? A: Yes, I read faces, paims, horoscopes and I use numerology as well.

India has her strategic sights on Antarctica

ntarctica is a vast area. If India and China are put together, they would not cover this continent which contains the world's biggest coal fields, over 50 billion barrels of oil, 115 billion cubic feet of natural gas and immense quantities of uranium and other valuable mineral resources. The Antarctic Ocean abounds in fish which could some day be a source of nourishment to India. However, these treasures are icelocked in the world's coldest and stormiest region which can freeze a careless person to death in minutes. But humans have never been deterred by natural hazards and the 20th Century saw many nations probing the area and sticking pins into their maps to claim real estate. The Antarctic Treaty, now over 20 years old, was initially signed by 12 countries including USA, USSR and UK. The aim was to end international squabbles by suspending all territorial claims and setting aside the continent for scientific purposes. Later, seven more countries signed the Treaty.

Considering that only the Indian Ocean separates India from Antarctica, we have always had our strategic sights on that continent. Thus, in 1959, Mr Krishna Menon in a fiery speech in the UN General Assembly had opposed the signing of the Antarctic Treaty. India's stand was that the Antarctica, like the oceans, was a common inheritance of mankind and any closedclub approach would be detrimental to the interests of the developing countries. It was at Mrs Indira Gandhi's personal initiative that the Department of Ocean Development was set up in July 1981 as a part of the Prime Minister's secretariat. Speaking in the Rajya Sabha, the Prime Minister said, "We do not subscribe to the view that only a few rich countries have the right to such uninhabited places, I think that we and other countries have an equal right." But the first problem facing Indian planners was how to reach the con-

The sea journey to Antarctica is a long and hard one. From Goa, a ship has to cross the Indian Ocean, refuelling en route at Mauritius. From here, the ship crosses the Roaring Forties—a strip of ocean between 40-60 degrees which is usually a rough passage. It takes



Lt Gen. E. A. VAS (Retd)

another fortnight to reach the Antarctic Convergence, where the warm waters of the Indian Ocean start mixing with the cold Antarctic Ocean. This area plays a major role in deciding the earth's climate in general and our monsoons in particular. Special techniques are required to move forward from here and reach land; a ship enters ice and, therefore, has to be an icebreaker. Most expeditions set up their camps on the fringes of the continent on ice; these camps sink every year, and a new camp is set up on top of the old which is linked by a ladder downwards; these sometimes sink down to four "floors."

Till 1982, a dozen countries operated research stations in Antarctica. India was the first developing country to raise its flag on the continent in 1982. She was followed a few months later by China. India's initial aims were modest. It was planned that the first expedition would have a reconnaissance role: to feel its way, select a site, build up knowhow on dealing with the weather and other administrative

The two Indian expeditions to the Antarctica are undoubtedly major achievements in the field of oceanography and scientific research. But more importantly, India's presence in Antarctica emphasises its strategic role, which is of even greater long term significance.

problems, and to test equipment. The second expedition would recover unmanned recording instruments left by the earlier one and establish a permanent base. India chartered the services of a Norwegian ice-breaker for the first and second expeditions. It was also able to seek valuable guidance regarding equipment from the Polar Research Institute of Norway. Meanwhile, a team of scientists was selected and given initial training at Machoi Glacier, a remote spot located 13,000 feet above sea level in the Himalayas. A team of officers from the Armed Forces, experienced in cold weather conditions, was also selected and briefed.

A national strategic plan involves coordinated thinking on the political, economic, social and psychological fronts; this does not always have to be supported by the military front or the armed forces. Despite the strong presence of 16 defence personnel who out numbered the 12 scientists in the second expedition, defence personnel had a non-military role and were responsible for establishing a direct radio link between India and the camp, selecting a permanent runway, providing medical cover and logistics support, operating the helicopters and erecting the Indiandesigned aluminium and thermocole huts for the permanent camp, which unlike many other camps, is located on rock.

Presently, intensive negotiations are going on among the Treaty powers to establish a regime for the exploitation of the continent's mineral resources. The signatories are all trying desperately to keep the United Nations out. Will India and China have a joint approach to the question of exploiting the resources of Antarctica? Will India and China opt to join the "Club of Nineteen" or will they stay with the Group of 77 and call for opening the Antarctica to all countries of the world? Will India, which has now developed a permanent interest in Antarctica, take the issue to the UN? If so, how will the UN react and how will these issues be decided? The two Indian expeditions to the Antarctica are undoubtedly major achievements in the field of oceanography and scientific research. But more importantly, India's presence in Antarctica emphasises its strategic role, which is of even greater long term significance.

TAMIL NADU

The judiciary is kept under surveillance

The judges feel persecuted as MGR's administration intimidates them

Madras: The relationship between the executive and the judiciary in Tamil Nadu is like a marriage gone sour. What should have been a symbiotic relationship, with one complementing the other, has degenerated into suspicion, antagonism and spite. To put it bluntly, the MGR administration weilds the big stick. There was a literal demonstration of this when Mr V.M. Tarkunde, the eminent jurist, was ruthlessly beaten up in September 1982 as he led a peaceful procession of about 40 members of Peoples Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) in Madurai to protest against police atrocities in the state. The domineering role of the government that sometimes borders on the boorish, is resented by the judges who are increasingly beginning to feel persecuted.

The latest link in the chain of events that has brought the two onto a path of confrontation is the judges' complaint of police surveillance on them. At a meeting held on 27 April, the judges of the Madras High Court (MHC) unanimously expressed concern over police surveillance on their movements and activities. One irate judge pointed out that there were constitutional methods to monitor the functioning of the judges and remove them if found wanting, but that this kind of police action was "reprehensible." Another pointed out sharply, "We are not habitual offenders or smugglers to be kept under watch." Agitated by the "intimidation" and "humiliation" meted out to the highest members of the judiciary, it was decided by those present at the meeting to take up the matter with the Chief Justice of India.

For once the government reacted with commendable alacrity. The proceedings of the meeting were reported in the city's leading newspaper, The Hindu. The same evening a government press note was issued denying the judges' charge. By way of explanation, the press note stated: "It was not surveillance of the judges but only a discreet watch at their residences," adding, that following complaints of misdemeanours by the sentries posted at the judges' houses, a police watch had been maintained

to keep an eye on the activities of these police guards. It was pointed out that on 4 April, in the course of a surprise inspection, an assistant commissioner had apprehended an inebriated sentry and had arrested and suspended him from service. As there were similar charges levelled against other sentries, the authorities had felt that a discreet watch on these guards in the houses of VVIPs (including the CM) was called for. The press note assured that it was inconceivable that the government could stoop so low as to keep the judges under surveillance as the gov ernment has the highest regard for the judiciary. With this, the government hoped to assure the ruffled sentiments of the judges. The next day at a marriage function, MGR himself denied the allegation, appearing to be shocked. He pointed out that on visiting the ill-lit house of his dear friend, Justice P.R. Gokulkrishnan, it was he who had ordered the posting of sentries to ensure protection to the judges.

The official explanation is at best, feeble, at worst! mendacious. What makes it really suspect is the disclosure of Justice V. Ramaswami that he had caught a CID agent tailing him and his family. When the official

MGR: animosity and suspicion



was caught (with the help of the sentry) and questioned, he confessed that he had been instructed to keep a surveillance on the judge. When the judge asked a senior police officer for an explanation, the latter had come up with the ingenious ploy that the sentries, and not the judges, were kept under surveillance. He explained that the constables posted at the judges' houses played cards and indulged in similar questionable activities. The judge was quick to point out that there is only one

sentry posted at a time. Justice T. Sathiadev complained of nocturnal stone-throwing incidents. He also said that he had been receiving a number of "obnoxious" phone calls of late, particularly after he had delivered adverse judgements against the government for its lapses. At this juncture, it may be pointed out that Justice Sadasivam too had made similar complaints of obnoxious phone calls and mysterious callers threatening his life. Justice Sadasivam heads the probe into the spirits scandal, originally instituted to look into acts of corruption by the MGR government. (The terms of reference have subsequently been considerably expanded so that now more attention is focused on 'malafide' acts committed during Karunanidhi's regime from 1969 to

Cries of outrage emanated from various quarters regarding the police surveillance on judges. At a special meeting of the Madras Bar Association on 28 April, a resolution was passed, condemning surveillance and describing it as a "blatant attack on the judiciary as well as on the privacy of the individuals." DMK president M. Karunanidhi seized yet another opportunity to eke political mileage out of the situation and disclosed to assembled pressmen that he knew of several instances of judges having been threatened by the "AIADMK goondas." The issue was raised in both the Houses of Parliament. In the Lok Sabha, Dr Subramaniam Swamy (Janata) pleaded for a discussion stating that there was a "breakdown of the constitutional machinery" in Tamil Nadu. Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee (BJP) said that though he did not

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construe it as tantamount to a breakdown, it was nevertheless a "serious
matter." Mr C.T. Dhandapani (DMK)
asserted that the state government's
action posed a threat to the independence of the judiciary. Speaker
Balram Jakhar said he would have to
ascertain more facts before allowing
a discussion on the subject. In the
Rajya Sabha Mr M.C. Bhandare
(Congress-I) urged the home minister to stop the surveillance. There
were clashes between the DMK and
the AIADMK MPs when the issue
was brought up.

The deplorable incident when Mr Tarkunde was beaten up was another instance when MGR had to personally apologise in view of the nationwide protest. It is learnt that a senior police officer in Madras, and a close confidant of MGR had given the green signal to the Madurai police authorities, to go ahead and intimidate the PUCL marchers. The slip-up occurred because nobody bargained for the presence of a man of Mr Tarkunde's stature. To the TN police, PUCL is anathema, primarily because they have raised questions about the authenticity of the 'encounter' deaths in the past.

Interestingly enough there has been a new development to the incident in which Mr Tarkunde was beaten up. Mr Sathyamoorthy, an advocate and PUCL member had filed a case against inspector Kumaravelu in the chief judicial magistrates court (CJM) in Madurai, regarding the beating up incident. He later filed a writ petition in the MHC urging that his case be transferred to the court of the CJM of Ramanathapuram, because the Madurai CJM was suspect. Mr Sathyamoorthy alleged in his petition that the hearing of his case had been systematically delayed and finally on 20 April when the hearing was fixed, he had seen inspector Kumaravelu going inside the magistrate's chamber where he had remained closeted for 20 minutes. Justice M.N. Moorthy of the MHC has demanded an explanation from the Madurai CJM and has stayed all proceedings in the latter's court regarding the case against inspector Kumaravelu. This instance. serves to underscore the growing suspicion that the police in the state are busy striking clandestine deals with members of the judiciary to meet their own dubious ends, and that they wish to subjugate the judiciary by either intimidation or bribery. It is not without a certain amount of justification that PUCL activists have time and again published articles in newspapers about Tamil Nadu being a "police state." In this context, Mr K. Mohandas, inspector general (crime and intelligence) has been identified as the man who pig-headedly believes in exhibiting the brutal might of the police. MGR relies very heavily on the police and senior police officers

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have often misguided him, convinced as they are that the *lathi* is the panacea to all problems.

If all the skirmishes that have erupted between the MGR government and the judiciary had to be described, it would literally be a blow-by-blow account. When Mr K.B.N. Singh was appointed as Chief Justice of Tamil Nadu, he had to face a lot of opposition from the TN government. MGR's contention was that the Chief Justice (indeed, even the judges of the High Court) should know the language of the state. The import was that those who knew only English and Hindi and who did not know even a smattering of Tamil, were resented. The outcome was that Mr Singh who has been posted here over a year ago, it yet to be allotted a house to stay in. He continues to live in a room in a guest house. This is despite law minister Mr C. Ponnaiyan's sanctimonious assurances at a press conference in October 1982 that there was no calculated allotment and that delay in the the government was willing to pay Rs 4000 a month, if need be, to accommodate Mr Singh. While such generosity is not warranted (the ceiling fixed is Rs 2500 per month) such callousness is also, by the same token, not warranted.

The government and the judiciary can never see eye to eye on another vital and sensitive area—the appointment of judges. Mr Singh had recommended the promotion of Mr S.A. Khader, the seniormost district judge as a High Court judge, as also Mr K. Venkataswamy who was ousted from the post of government pleader a few months ago. Predictably, only Mr Khader got the government clearance. Likewise, the state government's recommendation for the elevation of Mr K.M. Natarajan of the Salem Bar as High Court

Tarkunde: a taste of boorishness



judge, did not meet with the approval of Mr Singh. It has often been felt that only pro-government persons are appointed as judicial magistrates. Recently, Justice S. Natarajan of the MHC was exasperated by the inordinate delay in releasing the list of persons to be appointed as judicial magistrates.

Another recent confrontation was between the legislature and the judiciary (Sunday 24 April). Justica T. Sathiadev issued summons to MGR following a quo warranto petition filed by DMK MLC Arcot Veerasami regarding the derogatory remarks made by MGR about the courts on the floor of the Assembly. MGR referred the matter to the speaker, who after pondering over the issue for a week advised him to ignore the summons. The controversy took a dramatic turn when an upset Sathiadev wanted to know if MGR had made a personal reference to him.

Thanks to a ruling by Justice G. Maheshwaran of the MHC in 1981. the police in Tamil Nadu do not have to show the first interim report to the accused. Flouting legal convention, Justice Maheshwaran had ruled that "the entire scheme of the criminal procedure code is that investigations into an offence should be kept confidential and that copies of the FIR to the accused could be furnished only after the chargesheet is filed." Needless to say this ruling had been put to much use (or abuse) by the TN police-a fact that was highlighted in the case forsted against Skills, a small organisation devoted to evolving low cost methods of communication. At the instance of I.G. Mohandas, a case of sedition was filed against the members of the organisation, who were denied an FIR. They filed a counter-petition and subsequently all charges against them were dropped. Delivering the judgement in their case, Justice V. Ramaswamy, who is critical of Maheshwaran's ruling said, "There are over 1.5 lakh accused against whom the police are yet to file chargesheets. Most of them are kept on tenterhooks for nearly three years" adding, "the High Court will soon be issuing directions to magistrates to send reminders every two months to the police in every criminal case to frame the chargesheet." A few days after he gave this ruling, Justice Ramaswami became aware of the police surveillance. Indeed, it is these sort of incidents which give the impression that the TN police is bent on arm-twisting the law to bolster its not-so-above-board operations. And unless efforts are taken to remove the doubts and suspicions that cloud the TN administration's actions vis-avis the judges, the independence of the judiciary will certainly be undermined in the state. Anita Pratap

AASU infected by the canker of communalism

Gauhati: The communal frenzy which rocked Assam during and after the February elections, has stripped the All Assam Students Union (AASU) of its secular facade. This has led to a vertical split in the monolithic organisation which had spearheaded the movement for the

last four years.

The main strength of the Assam students so far had been their capacity to keep their internal bickerings within the premises of the students hostel. The washing of dirty linen in public, so much favoured by politicians, was never indulged in by the students. However, it is a fact that there had always been a tussle among the hawks and doves within the AASU as also between the liberal and communal elements. In the last two years, particularly during the period just before the elections, the pro-RSS elements in the movement had become so blatantly aggressive that a showdown seemed imminent. The Muslim students within the AASU who had all along watched the activities of the convener of the AASU volunteer force Mr Joynath Sharma with suspicion, are now convinced of his pro-RSS links. They also feel that people like him and his supporters should not be given much prominence within the AASU as they work on communal lines. The attacks on religious minorities immediately before and after the elections, had also antagonised a sizable section of the Assamese Muslims who had, by and large, remained aloof from the movement.

However, after the Nellie killings and other related incidents, there was a feeling among the Assamese Management was taking a dangerously communal turn. Pressure was mounted on the Mushm leadership of the AASU to take note of this fact. In fact, posters denouncing the AASU vicepresident, Mr Nurul Hussain and the president of the Kamrup district unit, Mr Nekibur Zaman, appeared in many localities dominated by Muslims in Gauhati and other places in Kamrup and Darrang districts. The Muslim leaders of the AASU had virtually become social outcasts.

While psychological pressure was mounted on them from their community, the students themselves realised that the pro-RSS elements led by Mr Joynath Sharma were slowly emerging as a powerful force within the AASU. Their potential for mischief was enhanced by the fact that the AASU volunteer force is a 50



Nurul Hussain: fear and misgivings

well-armed organisation and many of its local leaders are openly anti-Muslim. Arms and ammunition, collected by the force ostensibly for "self defence" were distributed only to members of the majority community. Much of the real information was also kept hidden from the Muslim leaders of the AASU. It is only recently that many of them, after having seen things for themselves on visiting the troubled spots and gathering information from the people, have come to know the actual events.

According to Mr Nekibur Zaman the meeting called by the Muslim members on 12 and 13 April on the premises of the Barooah Law College in Gauhati, was "done in order to review the situation after the election which had led to misgivings among the Muslims about the true purpose of the movement. Our idea was to suggest means of strengthening the AASU for the greater good of the people of Assam." According to the Muslim students, both Prafulla Mahanta and Bhrigu Phukan knew that the meeting was going to be held but did not ask them to with-

hold it. Prior to this, both Mr Nurul Hussain and Nekibur Zaman had told the AASU president and general secretary about their misgivings and their fear that the AASU was being unnecessarily influenced by the RSS and BJP supporters from within the students. However, though both the leaders promised to look into the matter, nothing was done. This was why the Muslim students submitted their 15-point memorandum to the AASU president for immediate implementation.

plementation. Mr Nekibur Zaman maintained, "By holding a meeting and submitting a memorandum, we have done no wrong and have not breached any clause of the AASU constitution. The removal of Nurul Hussain from the post of vice-president and the serving of show cause notice to him, is absolutely uncalled for." He pointed out that just after the announcement of the Assam elections when four AASU members, Bharat Narah, Digen Bora, Rupam Kakoti and Gagan Dutta had tried to negotiate with certain quarters in New Delhi for participation in the elections, no questions were asked about their move. Was this not breach of AASU

discipline, Mr Zaman queried. Mr Prafulla Mahanta and Mr Bhrigu Phukan maintain that by calling a separate meeting of Muslim stu-dents, Mr Nurul Hussain and his supporters have definitely breached the AASU discipline and as such will have to be served with show cause notice. They emphasised that the action taken against Mr Hussain is the normal practice in such a case. The AASU leaders seem determined to take a hard line on the issue and are not willing to make a compromise. Some more expulsions seem to be in the offing. Neither Mr Phukan nor Mr Mahanta are unnecessarily perturbed over the split in their ranks and feel that the overall impact will not be far-reaching. It is a fact that the Muslim leaders of the AASU are more or less embellishments with no real say in organisational matters. Moreover, as the majority of the Assamese Muslims have remained neutral on the Assam issue, the break of the Muslim students from the AASU will not make much of a difference to the support base of the agitation. As a matter of fact, there are very few Muslim boys in the organisation.

The present split in the AASU is regarded by many observers here as the handiwork of the astute chief minister, Mr Hiteswar Saikia. Senior civil and police officials in Gauhati are delighted with the turn of events and feel that "this is the beginning of the end for the movement wallahs." However, it is by now an established fact that the senior administrators of Assam are notoriously short-sighted and the majority of them do not see beyond the end of their noses.

Seema Guha

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An exercise in mutual back-scratching

New Delhi: As a consequence of the unity moves that have been brewing for a while Lok Dal president, Mr Charan Singh agreed to step down from the presidentship of his party, in favour of Babu Jagjivan Ram if the Congress(J) agreed to merge with the Lok Dal. From all indications, it appears that the merger of these parties is almost certain unless there is some last minute obstacle.

The process for unity took a positive turn when both the leaders jointly addressed a public rally at Patna on 1 May. The Lok Dal leader

said that his party and the Congress(J) had decided to have "unity in action for the next few months' and to seek the confidence of the people before a formal unification. Following the Patna meeting, Mr Charan Singh and Mr Jagjivan Ram plan another joint rally at Kanpur on 22 May and later, meetings at Indore and Bharatpur.

The only hitch that is delaying the proposed merger of these two parties, is the stand taken by Mr Suresh Ram, Jagjivan Ram's son. He has been insisting that both the parties

should be dissolved before the merger takes place and that a new party with a new name and flag should be created. Moreover, the Lok Dal is vehemently opposed to this idea. Its members feel that if they lose both the party's name as well as its presidentship, they would face a tremendous identity crisis. The only condition in which they might be prepared for a dissolution is if the Democratic Socialist Party president, Mr Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna (with Congressmen of his ilk), also agrees to merge into this alliance.

The main architect of this proposed unity and friendship between the Congress(J) and the Lok Dal is the Lok Dal secretary and Rajya Sabha member, Mr Satyapal Malik. Mr Malik had been openly advocating this move since 1978, but he did not weild enough influence at that time. He is not, of course, the first

A heroic fight against cancer

Bombay: Vandana Kadam, a nineyear-old schoolgirl from Pune was seriously ill and had come with her father to the Tata Memorial Hospital in Bombay for tests. Here they found that she showed all the symptoms of acute mylogenous leukaemia, which in children and adults is a largely fatal disease despite advanced drug treatment like chemotherapy. About ninety per cent of the victims succumb within two years.

The doctors diagnosed the disease in Vandana who was physically wrecked by weakness, anaemia, deficiency of blood platelets and infiltration of the body with leukaemic cells, in September 1982. The development of cells was chaotic, there was an abnormal growth of cells in her bone marrow and immature white blood cells in the bloodsteam. Vandana was put on a radiation and chemotherapy treatment for which she journeyed to Bombay intermittently.

As she was responding well, the hospital decided to go for a bone marrow transplant. Two of the doctors, both in their early thirties-Suresh Advani and Mrs P.A. Kurkure--had been trained in donor bone marrow transplant. Dr Advani studied in Seattle Hospital and Dr Kurkure was at the Royal Marsdan Hospital in England.

Since August 1982, Dr Kurkure had performed five bone marrow transplants at the Tate Memorial Hospital but with a difference. She had used the patient's own marrow and the cases were of specific area cancer. In the case of leukaemia where blood cells of the entire body are affected, the transplant has to be from donor

Dr Advani and Dr Kurkure explained that the first step was to get a matching donor. This was made easier because Vandana is one of five children and the bone marrow could be

taken from her seven-and-a-half-yearold brother, Umesh. Vandana's father, Vithal Kadam had been asked whether he would permit his daughter to have a bone marrow transplant and he is said to have told the doctors that even if it was not successful in the case of his daughter, it would help the doctors in their search for a cure. And so Vandana was admitted to an isolated, germ-free environment on 11 March and she was fed through a catheter inserted in the neck as she would not be able to eat anything once they started treatment of heavy drugs and radiation to destroy her marrow and leukaemia cells. Normal and leukaemic cells which were formed in the bone marrow were first totally destroyed by powerful drugs and lethal total body radiation. The patient at the moment of total radiation was reduced to almost death stage, the cell count dropped to near zero point and the patient's system

Vandana : a brave fight for survival



was rendered totally defenceless against the slightest of infection from the environment.

After this was over the next stage was to inject Umesh's bone marrow cells. This process is tough and tedious. Umesh received 100 punctures around his hip which is the place where the most marrow is produced. With each puncture, three cc of bone marrow was extracted; 300 ccs were needed. When all of it was collected and the cell counts in Vandana's body dropped to near zero, the donor bone marrow was injected intravenously into her body.

The doctors in the 35-member team headed by Dr Praful Desai, director, Tata Memorial Centre, which worked from 11 March to 20 March on this feat, humbly admit, "While this is not an orginal contribution, we believe it is a pioneering one in our country and will open new vistas in the treatment not only of leukaemia but other diseases too, particularly in children and young adults."

Even six weeks after the transplant, Vandana was up and about Her chance of survival, say the doctors, is 40 per cent, which is good. It will take at least two years for the effects of radiation and the strong drugs to wear off. Her skin, now blackened by radiation, will lighten and her hair which has virtually dropped off will grow again. Vandana is lucky that she can survive. Four other children who had come with her did not survive the chemotherapy treatment.

The Tata Memorial Hospital where this heroic transplant was performed, prides itself for more reasons than one. The costs which were borne entirely by the hospital, worked out to around Rs 1.95 lakhs, whereas the cost abroad is rupees eight to ten lakhs.

Olga Tellis

person to try and bring these leaders on one platform. During the 1978-79 Janata Party crisis, Mr Madhu Limaye and Mr Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna had also tried, unsuccessfully, to bring these two together. Then again in 1980-81. Mr George Fernandes too failed in the same mission. Last year, during the Haryana Assembly elections, both Mr Madhu Limaye and Mr Satyapal Malik had wanted an electoral alliance between the Lok Dal and the Congress(J) in the state but the pro-BJP lobby led by Mr. S.P. Gautam (the present treasurer of the Lok Dal), prevailed upon the Chaudhary, who entered into an alliance with BJP in Haryana instead. It was only after the Delhi elections when the Lok Dal-BJP alliance failed again, that Mr Malik's moves got a new lease of life.

It is fairly clear that Mr Charan Singh has asked Mr Jagjivan Ram to head the Lok Dal in order to remove the impression that he and his party

are anti-harijan. As for Mr Jagjivan Ram, the presidentship of the Lok Dal would mean a return from the political wilderness into which he had slipped. (There is no denying the fact that today Mr Ram's party exists only on paper.) The elements in the Lok Dal who support this proposed unity, are quite convinced that the political friendship between the two leaders would lead to an alliance between two major vote banks in the north-the backward castes led by Chaudhury Charan Singh, and the scheduled castes, who are behind Babuji.

There is one significant factor, however, which the Lok Dal cannot afford to overlook, in the near future. And that is, the majority of the grassroots workers of the party would prefer a unity with the Janata Party instead. They feel that the natural ally of the Lok Dal is not Babuji's Congress(J) but the Janata

Party.

A Special Correspondent

TAX EXEMPTIONS

A paradise lost in Sikkim

Gangtok: The bubble has burst. With the introduction of the Central Excise Act, Sikkim has ceased to be the tax 'Shangrila' it had been for nearly two years for the large tobacco companies of India. Far from ushering in an era of rapid industrialisation, the cigarette companies which were earning abnormally high profits have closed down and over 1,000 workers have been thrown out of their jobs.

When this former kingdom became a part of India in 1975, part of the merger agreement was that central laws and regulations would be introduced here only in a phased manner, ostensibly for the speedy industrialisation of the state. The central excise, income, dividends and corporation taxes, the Industrial Development and Regulation Act and the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act were thus not made applicable in Sikkim.

One man, who reaped maximum benefit from this arrangement, was Mr B. K. Shrestha, a suave business-

SUNDAY

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION
DEALS WITHIN A DEAL

The full story of how some of India's richest and most powerful industrialists were frightened by a threat from abroad

ZIA, ISLAM AND THE GUN

By Tariq Ali

man based in Patan city in the Kathmandu valley. Both the chief secretary and industries secretary to the government of Sikkim, Mr M. P. Pradhan and Mr K. C. Pradhan, were Mr Shrestha's cousins. Thus, bypassing the directorate of industries and armed with a letter of intent from the industries minister, Mr Sanchaman Limbu (who has since been removed), Mr Shrestha floated the Sikkim Tobacco Company Ltd as a joint venture with the state government in December 1980. He held a majority 51 per cent and the state held the remaining 49 per cent of the shares through the Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Company. Sikkim Tobacco then went in for a collaboration with the Golden Tobacco Company (GTC) of Bombay controlled by the Dalmias. The arrangement was that all technical knowhow and raw materials were to be supplied by GTC. Machinery was also hired out at a nominal rate. This company was to produce GTC's popular brand, *Panama*. For every 1,000 sticks rolled, GTC would have to pay Rs 5 to Sikkim Tobacco as "fabrication charges." Production started in January 1981.

An examiniation of the cost structure reveals interesting details. A stick which costs 10 paise to the consumer is made up of the following components. 6.5 paise is accounted for by central excise dues and 2 paise is dealers' commission and profits. In other words, the actual cost of production works out to only 1.5 paise per stick. At that time the bulk excise levy was Rs 65,000 per one million stick. The entire marketing operations were channelised through two outlets, namely, the Golden Himal Investment Co. Pvt Ltd and the Golden Sikkim Investment Co Pvt Ltd, both based in the state's capital, Gangtok. While Mr Shrestha owned the former company, the latter was controlled by four members of the board of directors of GTC, the managing director, the financial controller, the executive director marketing and Mr Sanjay Dalmia, who has ownership interests in GTC.

Another agreement was that Sikkim Tobacco would receive profits and in turn bear the expenditure in the following proportion: up to 100 million sticks 70 per cent; up to 200 million sticks, 60 per cent and over 200 million sticks, 50 per cent. Sikkim Tobacco was producing an average of 245 million sticks by October 1982.

By end of 1981, ITC too decided to capitalise on the boom. The company joined hands with Kanchenjunga Properties and Agencies and opened up their factory at Jorethang in South Sikkim. This move from ITC prompted Mr Shrestha to file a suit against the state government in the High Court on grounds that Sikkim Tobacco had the sole rights to produce cigarettes in the state. The state government then issued an

ordinance in June 1982 whereby more than one producer was permitted to produce the same commodity. It was also around this time that the industries secretary Mr K. C. Pradhan was transferred from his post and soon after this, Mr Shrestha withdrew his suit. Earlier, the Governor of Sikkim, Mr Homi J. H. Talyarkhan, had addressed the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and briefed Bombay industrialists about the opportunities available in Sikkim for setting up new industrial ventures.

The floodgates were thrown open and many other companies arrived on the scene, collaborating with sections of the local elite. GTC expanded their operations further and established new manufacturing units with Tendong Pvt Ltd owned by Mr R. Lakhotia, Shangrila Enterprises controlled by the owner of Sikkim Distilleries, and Denzong Industries owned by the president of the Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee(I), Mr Sonam Tsering. The National Tobacco Company (NTC) under Duncans Agro Industries Ltd of Calcutta, teamed up with Rigsell Industries Pvt Ltd, while Godfrey Phillips opened their account with Sikkim Investments Pvt Ltd in a makeshift factory at Deorali and The Vazir Sultan Tobacco Company of Hyderabad had a tie up with Rayong Industries Pvt Ltd. The management of the latter groups were, in effect, in the hands of the parent company since their popular brands were being produced. The sales were channelised through the local partners and both profits and costs were usually shared on a 60:40 basis.

The companies, of course, knew that the tentre would any day clamp down and impose excise duty on their production. Zero hour came this year and all the equipment in the factories ground to a halt. During this period the central government is estimated to have lost over Rs 300 crores by way of excise duty from cigarette companies and cosmetics manufacturers. The Industrial Development and Regulation Act was also introduced in Sikkim soon afterwards.

Till February this year, 22 letters of intent were issued for the manufacture of cigarettes alone in Sikkim. An interesting development that occurred recently was the dropping of the minister of industries, Mr Sanchman Limbu, from the cabinet. Mr Limbu was initially responsible for issuing the letters of intent. His portfolio was taken over by the Chief Minister, Mr Nar Bahadur Bhandari. Mr Sherab Palden who was then the minister for finance, reportedly objected to certain top bureaucrats conniving in the "industrialisation" process of Sikkim. He too was not only dropped from the cabinet but from the party as well.

The side effects of the tax bonanza have not always been particularly favourable to the Sikkimese. Real estate values shot up over 20 times in Gangtok in the past two years. Moreover, the manufacture of cigarettes has hurt the sentiments of the Buddhist section of the population. The lure of quick and easy money had started eating into the social fabric and it is felt that the companies had reached a level where they could influence state policies and programmes. The profit motive could not have been more glaringly revealed than when all production ceased the very next day after the central tax laws were introduced in Sikkim. Most of the workers in the cigarette factories were classified as general, casual workers and

after three months of training were either retrenched or kept as probationers. Following the guidelines provided by the government, the retrenchment was completed by early March.

This period will continue to remain in the minds of the industrialists and the local elite who can count their share of the spoils and look back nostalgically on the Shangrila that was. But it has been an altogether shocking experience for the simple honest person in the state who naturaly feels that his land has been mercilessly exploited and subsequently dropped like a hot brick.

Yamben Laba

GUJARAT

Hostilities come out in the open

Ahmedabad: Even as he is beset with group rivalries within the Gujarat Congress(I), the chief minister Madhavsinh Solanki appears to be drifting away from his political mentor and former PCC president,

Jinabhai Darji, as well.

In hard-hitting public utterances last month, Mr Darji, the mercurial and outspoken leader of the tribals in south Gujarat, accused some of the CM's closest allies of trying to oust him from the post of the executive chairman of the 20-point programme implementation committee. Mr Darji identified Mrs Kokila Vyas, minister of state for health and tourism, her husband Mr Hariprasad Vyas and Mr Ashok Bhogilal Patel, former treasurer of the PCC as among those who wish to see him go. These three were bracketed with dissident leaders like Mr Narsinh Makwana and Navin Ravani, both MPs, in their attempts to remove Mr Darji. This is the first time in the past two-and-a-half years that Mr Darji has come out openly against these people.

The dissidents have never made a secret of their intense dislike of Jinabhai Darji as executive chairman of the 20-point programme im-

Darji: hard-hitting statements



plementation committee and they have been saying that he has tarnished the image of the Congress(I) in Gujarat. As executive chairman of this high-powered committee, he enjoys the status of a minister, although he does not draw a salary. The opposition parties have always dubbed Mr Darji as the 'super chief minister.' And the dissidents have been against him because he is the proponent of the Kham (kshatriya, harijans, adivasis, Muslims) theory, advocating seat allocations among these communities.

What has surprised political analysts in the state is that the former PCC president has chosen to come out openly against his detractors now. He is still full of praise for the chief minister, of course, who, he said has been consistently telling the high command that his work in the 20-point programme committee has established a good rapport between the party and the poor. Mr Darji however, did not seem to be so sure of the high command's attitude. In an interview published in a Gujarati daily, he said he would never think of leaving the committee because of the campaign against him. But, he stated, the moment the high command said so, he would quit.

Wittingly or otherwise, it was the media that played a role in bringing out Mr Darji's venom. As newsmen vied with each other to publish what, in fact, Mr Darji told reporters strictly off the record, the truth came out into the open. Observers here feel that Mr Jinabhai Darji has brobably realised that sooner or later, chief minister Solanki may have to sacrifice him for the sake of amity in the faction-ridden party.

Tushar Bhatt

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Brutality in science



A monkey strapped tor experiments in a US laboratory

Washington: Even as Americans prepared for massive civil demonstrations to be held in protest of the brutal treatment and wasteful use of monkeys in national primate centres, various Indian press reports revealed that the US government was pressuring India to lift its ban on the export of rhesus monkeys. Similar pressures were recently applied in Bangladesh, with certain US state department officials allegedly threatening to cut off food aid if monkey exporters were denied permits.

In the last two years, the U.S. has been rocked by exposes of conditions at government sponsored laboratories that use monkeys and other animals. Last year the organisation, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), conducted an undercover investigation and brought to light the shocking mistreatment of monkeys imported into the US from the Philippines for "medical experiments." Macaque monkeys, covered with sores, some with open, broken bones, were seized by police from the filthy, cramped cages of a renowned Maryland scientist. Barrels of monkeys which had died mysteriously were also uncovered. Months earlier, Donald Barnes, a researcher for 16 years at a Texas air force base, had resigned, exposing brutal experi-ments in which rhesus monkeys were permanently strapped into metal chairs, given fatal doses of radiation and forced to run on treadmills until they died.

According to PETA chairperson, Alex Pacheco, "Many monkeys assigned to medical experiments' are actually killed in hideous and painful biological and chemical warfare tests, like those conducted at the Aberdeen

Proving Grounds and at Fort Dietrich, USA. These experimentation facilities are exempt from all federal and local inspection requirements."

In the recent past, Time magazine had reported fraud in animal experimentation at the prestigious Harvard University; articles and books have been appearing routinely on the subject of mistreatment of animals in American laboratories. The use of monkeys in other questionable experiments is under fire now. Dr Robert White of the Cleveland, Ohio Clinic is very well known for transplanting the heads of monkeys. This is causing a great ethical debate among religious leaders who do not believe that the ultimate goal—to transfer a head from one human being to another-is morally acceptable. Dr Gennarelli at the University of Pennsylvania is under attack for testing football and boxing helmets by crushing the heads of fully conscious monkevs.

Richard Attenborough's epic film, Gandhi, is now showing to full houses all over the US and American news programmes and conversations are alive with discussions on ahimsa. Everyone in the US is moved and inspired by Gandhi's strength, courage, conviction and compassion for all living beings. His words against the laboratory use of live animals (vivisection) are now seen on placards and leaflets: "I abhor vivisection with all my soul. I detest the unpardonable slaughter of innocent life in the name of science." PETA chairperson Alex Pacheco says, "In these times of hun-ger and hardship, money wasted on crude, repetitious and frivolous animal experiments should be spent to feed the people of the Third World nations."



Science for children

Produced by Vikram A. Sarabhai Community Centre and VISKAT Ahmedabad

Crova's disc

The Crova's disc will help you visualise the changes which take place in the air when trains of sound waves are set up by a vibrating body.

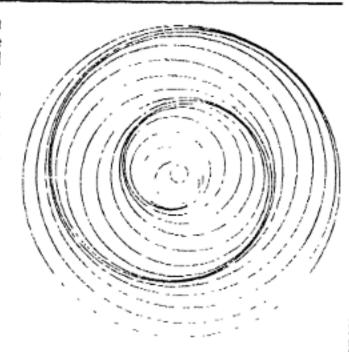
The only implements you need are a thick paper card which is 25×25 cm in size and a drinking straw or hand drill.

Drawing a circle with a radius of four mm near the middle of the card, divide it into eight equal parts and number it as shown in the figure below. With the compass point on No. 1, draw a circle with a radius of 20 mm. Similarly, place the point on No. 2 and draw a circle of radius 24 mm. Continue in this way around the inner circle making the radius circle four mm larger than the one before. You will thus draw eight consecutive circles.

Continuing around the inner circle a second time again make the radius of each circle four mm larger than the one before. You can do this a third time also.

You now have a Crova's disc. Bore a hole in the centre of the disc with the width of a drinking straw. Insert the straw in the centre of the disc, and spin it—or better still use a hand-drill to rotate the disc.

The best method of observing the



effects of waves crowding together, moving apart, drawing up together and separating again is, to look through a narrow slit, covering the rest of the disc while the disc is spinning. As the sound waves propagate in the air, regions called 'con densations,' where the layers or shells of particles of air move close together, and regions called 'rarefactions,' where the layers or shells of air particles move further apart, are formed.

Spot what's wrong

Can you make out what is wrong with this picture?

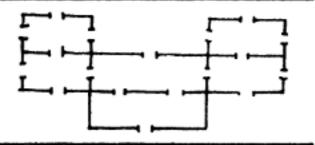


Do you know?

A common way of cooling one's tea is to pour it in a saucer-partly because the cold saucer takes some of the heat, but more so because it spreads the tea out and so exposes it. Heat, as we know, can get in and out when things are exposed. But if we take a hot bottle and wrap it in a thick layer of blankets, it will stay hot for many hours. Similarly, the air and the crust of the earth serve as blankets which keep the fire inside the earth packed in. Taking into account the fact that these blankets are being warmed from outside by the sun and that new heat is being generated by radioactive elements. it is understandable that it takes a long time for the earth to get cooled. But cool it must.

Figure this out

The diagram(right)shows the plan of a house with a number of doors in each room. Can you go through all the doorways passing through each doorway only once? You may start by entering any room and end up anywhere.



Bark marks

Next time you go on a wildlife expedition, do not be discouraged if you don't see animals face to face. Look instead for the signs of the animals by observing marks left by some species on the bark of trees while they hunt for food.

Take bears, for instance, which leave behind tooth and claw marks on trees after they strip off the bark and eat the juicy pulp within, or deer which eat the bark of young trees when food is in short supply by tearing it off with an upward movement of their teeth. Identifying animals by examining the marks

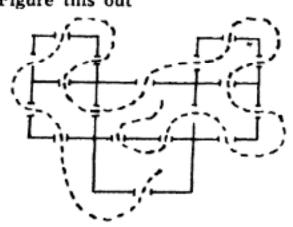
they make on barks can be an interesting pastime.





Solution

Figure this out





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This Andia



MADRAS: The Tamil Nadu Legi: active Council witnessed an unusual scene when leader of the House, Raja Mohammed, challenged a Congress(I) nember, Mr Tindivanam Ramamoorhi, to come out of the House for a duel.' Angry exchanges between the wo followed a remark by Mr S. R. Eradha (AIADMK) that production of khadi and handlooms could be aboished in keeping with the times. Mr Ramamoorthi asked whet!.er the chief ninister had the guts to abolish *khadi* production. When Mr Eradha proested against this remark, Mr Raja Mohammed intervened and said that if Ar Ramamoorthi wanted to settle cores outside the House, he was prepared. The challenge was accepted by he member. The information miniser, R. M. Veerappan, intervened and aid that the views of the ruling party nember on abolition of *khadi* need not ecessarily be the views of the state overnment. Mr Ramamoorthi should ot have used harsh words against the hief minister, he added-Northern ndia Patrika (Jayanto Kr. Dey, Allaabad)

EW DELHI: India's ambassador in urma, Mr G. G. Swell, has been warded a black belt in karate by the iger Karate Belt Association of Buria. It took Mr Swell nearly two years intensive daily practice to win the istinction. In the diplomatic history India, he is the first ambassador to in a black belt in karate—Hindustan imes (H. Majumdar, Roorkee)

ELGAUM: Mr S. Somnath, assistant ommissioner, Belgaum, who presided wer a municipal meeting on 16 April 283 to sanction 30 janata houses, was nuned when he found that the municipal peon, Waghamare, was handling a allotment show. Mr Somnath found at Waghamare had placed few forms wen though he had received many oplications—Indian Express (Kudur Satyanarayana, Bangalore)

BANGALORE: Can the inability of a father to find matching brides for his highly qualified sons be made a public grievance to seek remedy from the government? The answer seems to be in the affirmative to a resident of Madras. The resident, a retired superintendent in posts and telegraphs department, has made a request to the state law minister, Mr A. Lakshmisagar who also holds the portfolio of public grievances. In effect the request wants him to conduct a matrimonial bureau—Indian Express (Lalitha Ananthanarayanan, Hubli)

CALCUTTA: Mr Jyoti Basu was shocked when he went to the SSKM hospital on 19 April 1983 to get his teeth examined and found that the most sophisticated dental machine there had been out of order for the past ten years because rats had gnawed its electrical wiring. Mr Jatin Chakraborty, PWD minister, said that not only had the machine been nibbled by rats, but many of its parts had also been stolen. The machine was installed in the hospital in 1965 at a cost of Rs 35,000 and had never been serviced since-Statesman (Chain Rup Sethia, Calcutta)

NEW DELHI: It was literally a case of grabbing the chair in the Delhi Development Authority's Vikar Kutir last week. A superintending engineer, Mr R. L. Hans, currently posted in the Indoor Stadium, forced his way into the office of Mr J. P. Singhal, another superintending engineer, and in the latter's absence occupied his chair. He then reportedly forced the personal assistant to circulate a note saying that he had assumed charge of the new office. When Mr Singhal came from his work site he found that his chair had been grabbed by his colleague. Accompanied by the DDA's chief engineer, Mr Singhal rushed to the vicechairman, Mr Harish Khanna, who immediately ordered the "reinstatement" of Mr Singhal. It is learnt that Mr Singhal has been transferred to the CPWD, his parent office. He has, however, not been relieved due to certain exigencies. Mr Hans was due to fill his vacancy—Indian Express (R.K. Jaisansaria, Calcutta)

NEW DELHI: Two slices of "Modern Bread" with an iron ring embedded in them were displayed in the Lok Sabha on 18 April 1983 by Mr Satyanarayan Jatiya (BJP). During zero hour, Mr Jatiya brought to the notice of the Speaker that foreign matter had been found in the bread manufactured by a government company. He first took the slices to agriculture minister Birendra Singh, who referred him to his colleague, food minister Bhagwat Jha Azad. When Mr Jatiya approached Mr Azad he waved him off—Hindustan Times (Amarjeet Singh Bhatia, Mussoorie)

Without Comment



We are poor people. We do not go on aerial surveys of floods. I go in my old Ambassador to visit people in their poor dwellings—Begum Abdullah, wife of Sheikh Abdullah, in Probe

Poor Sethi, the home minister, rising from his seat half a dozen times to walk up to Alexander. It is Alexander who should go to the home minister—Atal Behari Vajpayee in Surya

These Sikhs (like Zail Singh and Darbara Singh) fill their stomachs by licking the dust off Indira's chappals—Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in India Today

No major American television network will buy a film critical of Mrs Gandhi at this juncture. The Americans, in any case, love a royal family, provided they do not have to live under one themselves—Nayantara Sahgal, on the proposed American and Russian films on Nehru, in Statesman

The Third World is filled with primitive people telling virtuous lies. We are not one world and should not pretend we are—V.S. Naipaul in New York Times

Afghanistan is not an Asian Switzerland where people ard scampering up the mountains every weekend to vote in a referendum—Inder Malhotra in Times of India

I am a cautious banker by tradition and I am still cautious—Tom Clausen, president of the World Bank, in *The Times*, London

They (Indian editors) are not interested in the making of journalists and quite unintentionally through indifference and complacency, may preside over the breaking of much young talent— Dom Moraes in Gentleman

Journalism is supposed to be the most fun a woman can have with her clothes on—Katherine Whitehorn, noted British columnist, quoted in Weekend Review



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OTHE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

A nother actress upon whom lady luck has not smiled too kindly, is Zarina Wahab. With her first few films, no one ever had any doubts that she was good, reliable, artiste material. But then, suddenly, things seemed to change and she slipped into the trap of doing some petty roles in some really insignificant films. And this is a sure way of getting sidetracked in the celluloid world. These days, therefore, even those insignificant films hardly ever come her way. She is now panic-stricken—and understandably so-wondering if she too will soon join the ranks of so many talented yet neglected actresses, for no fault of hers. If that does happen, the industry will be the poorer for it.

It is a sad and sorry state of affairs for someone who once showed tremendous promise. Tina Munim seems to be at the most dismal depths of her career. She has not signed any new films as a heroine and the new heroes of the industry, particularly the star-sons, appear to be unwilling to work with her. The scene is certainly gloomy for the pretty young actress. So much so that Tina is now accepting any roles that are thrown her way—she is even willing to make mere guest appearances. Little wonder then if she is having doubts about her choice in her personal life. Did she, indeed, make a mistake by ditching her boyfriend of seven years' standing, the young Sanjay Dutt, and falling for Rajesh Khanna, a controversial figure and a man 20 years her senior? It certainly seems to have affected her professional lite in an adverse manner, but perhaps it's still not too late to make amends.

Nobody knows, even today, exactly what went
wrong in the Danny Denzongpa-Kim relationship.
These two had a beautiful
affair going for years
cogether (Danny was even
ready to marry Kim) but
then things turned sour all
of a sudden. The very same
Danny who had left no stone
anturned in his attempts to
bring Kim into the limelight,
lecided to drop her and left



Danny: unfaithrul?

her to fend for herself in the big, bad film world. But hats off to the plucky Kim. She is today, freshly enthused and is courageously giving her career. a hearty second try. Not only this, but she has also decided that if she fails in this attempt then she will leave the country and make a new life for herself somewhere abroad.



Zarina: signing petty roles

Madhavi should have no cause for complaint. She has nearly 100 films to her credit and she has made a fairly widespread name for herself by being quite a versatile actress, capable of handling a variety of roles. But yet, she is dissatisfied. And the reason for this is that she has never yet done a role where her talents as a



Rajalakshmi: optimistic

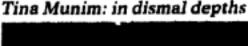
dancer are displayed. And, she thinks, unless she gets such a role, her career is going to remain incomplete. The quirks in filmdom will never cease to surprise!

Rajalakshmi, who shot into stardom with her first film, Shankarabharanam, is now wondering what went wrong with her She is yet to get another challenging role after that, and has had to settle for left-over roles. But she has optimism aplenty and that is what keeps her going.

Once upon a time, Radhika and Chiranjeevi were the hit pair of the Telugu celluloid world. But of late producers seem to prefer to cast Madhavi with Chiranjeevi. Is it because of Radhika's marriage to Pratap Pothen? Or has Pratap asked her to go slow?

Playback singer S. Janaki celebrated her 25th year in the film industry at a modest function held recently. So far she has recorded about 7500 songs and will soon complete 10,000. Though Lata Mangeshkar has sung more songs than she has, Janaki can confidently say that she is one up on the former—she has sung in more languages than Lata.

Saritha and Sarada have a few things in common. Not only are they very talented actresses, but both share an abhorrence for make-up. Unlike others, on screen they do not apply any make-up. It is clean, natural beauty for both of them.





Sets the trend with beautiful blends.

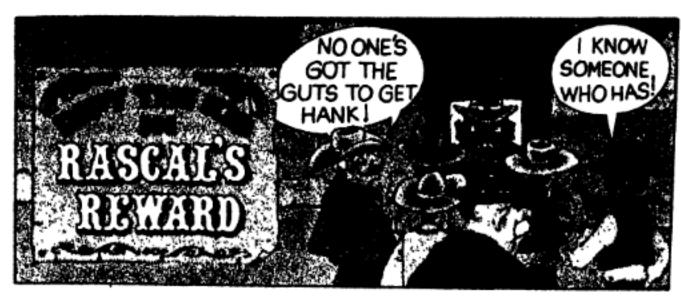
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ARIES (15 April-14 May) This is going to be an auspicious week for all of you. There will be rapid expansion in business.

Speculative ventures will yield fruitful results. A secret association will be extremely helpful. Professionals are likely to win the praise of all. A lucky week for eligible bachelors and also for those who are in love.

Good dates: 17, 18 and 19. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: North-west.



TAURUS (15 May---14 June) Your domestic affairs will make steady progress this week. This period is particularly favourable for mat-

ters relating to property, For those employed a promotion is likely. Businessmen should embark on new ventures. A lucky phase for speculators and gamblers.

Good dates: 15, 17 and 19, Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 4. Favourable direction: East.



GEMINI (15 June-14 July) This is not a favourable week for you. You will be faced with a lot of problems ⊠but do not lose heart.

Businessmen are asked not to start new business enterprises. All kinds of speculative ventures should be avoided. Professionals should stay away from any kind of controversy. An elderly member at home might fall seriously ill-

Good dates: 19, 20 and 21. Lucky numbers: 2, 6 and 8. Favourable direction: North-east.



CANCER (15 July-14 August) This week begins with substantial gains for most of you either through inheritance or promotions.

Businessmen should look forward to a profitable yet busy week. Students will receive awards for their extra-curricular activities. A good week for lawyers and those in the civil service. Courtship and marriage are forecast.

Good dates: 16, 18 and 20. Lucky numbers: 4, 7 and 9. Favourable direction: West.

LEO (15 August—14 Septem-

ber) Businessmen are advised to devote more time in their work lest they be cheated. Try not to rely on any one this week. A favourable week. for professionals and creative artists. Social engagements will keep them busy. The domestic front looks peaceful. A big surprise in the form of an inheri-

Good dates: 15, 16 and 18. Lucky numbers: 1, 2 and 4. Favourable direction: South-east.

tance is in store for some of you.



VIRGO (15 September—14 October) If extravagance and over-optimism is curbed, this week will prove to be a fairly lucky one. You

will achieve progress in almost all fields of work. Sportsmen will receive awards. For professionals, there are chances of going abroad on assignment. Domestic life remains peaceful.

Good dates: 17, 19 and 21. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 7. Favourable direction: East.



ZLIBRA (15 October—14 November) This week, you will be affected by favourable stars. Some of you will inherit property and most of

your court cases will be solved. You will also find yourself in a position to repay your debts. Speculative ventures will yield fruitful results. A good week for those in love: secret meetings and outings are indicated.

Good dates: 16, 19 and 20. Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: North.



SCORPIO (15 November---14 December) Make hay while the sun shines: adopt this as your motto this we Friends and relatives will

be around to share your happiness. A promotion is likely for those of you who are employed. Financially, this looks like a bright week. Businessmen will prosper. However, this is not a time to settle legal matters.

Good dates: 15, 18 and 19. Lucky numbers: 1, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: South.



SAGITTARIUS (15 December-14 January) A word of caution: this is going to be a hectic week for you. Businessmen should pay attention to minute details. New contracts

and deals are in the offing. Those in service are advised not to displease their seniors. Romantic prospects do not look very promising. A letter at the end of the week will bring important news.

Good dates: 16, 18 and 21. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 8. Favourable direction: South-west.



CAPRICORN (15 January....14 February) Financially, this is a very lucky week. Businessmen may embark on new ventures. Profes-

sionals may have to make very important changes in their careers. A change of residence is indicated. The time is particularly favourable for creative writers. This is not a good week for those in love.

Good dates: 15, 18 and 20. Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 9. Favourable direction: West.



AQUARIUS (15 February---14 March) A fair measure of success and good fortune is in store for you this week. Others will benefit through

the good offices of those in authority. An excellent week for those in the civil services. Policemen will receive awards for their bravery. Those above 40, should be vigilant about their health. This is an excellent week for love and marriage.

Good dates: 15, 18 and 20. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 8. Favourable direction: South.



PISCES (15 March---14 April) This week you are advised to be cautious in all your dealings. Whether in business or on the professional

front, things do not look very peaceful. This is a time when your enemies will prowl around you: you will be deceived by colleagues and friends and at home you will be misunderstood by one of your near ones! Keep an eye on your health.

Good dates: 15, 19 and 20. Lucky numbers: 1, 4 and 7. Favourable direction: North.

For these bern on Fridays: Most of you possess very complex natures. You happen to be amiable and fun-loving in a gathering of friends and relatives but among professional people and employers you tend to be irritated with whatever they say. This

dichotomy in your character does not easily gain you friends. But those who like you do so because they understand your innate goodness of heart. So, a word of advice: it does not pay to ill-treat any one. Be good and attentive and you will make headway.







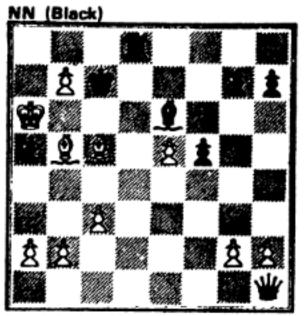








Chess



Steel (White)

Although the emphasis of this column is very much on current developments in chess, I do not feel this should entirely preclude the occasional jaunt back into the game's rich and colourful past. For today then we turn the centre of our attention from Moscow to Calcutta (I), the year 1886.

Not too much is known about the creators of the following encounter, least of all the name of the player of the black pieces. I should perhaps point out that the whole variation was all theory at the time, Steinitz having first analysed it in the 1860s.

White: Steel Black: NN Vienna Game, Steinitz Gambit Calcutta 1886.

1 P-K4 P-K4 2 N-QB3 N-QB3 3 P-B4 PxP 4 P-Q4 Q-R5+ 5 K-K2

Stelnitz's ultra-provocative move which is by no means as bad as it looks

5... P-Q4
Alming for the jugular. Modern tastes favour the more conservative 5... P-Q3
6 PxP B-N5+ 7 N-B3 0-0-0!
8 PxN B-Q84!

White is already on the edge of a precipice. The loss of the QP would leave his king totally devoid of protection.

9 PxP+ K-N1 10 N-QN5! N-B3

11 P-B3!
Putting his faith firmly in Steinitzian principles, namely that where the centre is firm there is no danger. (Could have fooled me).
11 . . . KR-K1+ 12 K-Q3 B-B4+
13 K-B4 B-K3+ 14 KxB
Truly cutting the Gordian knot. He could

Truly cutting the Gordian knot. He could have sought a draw by 14 K-Q3 B-B4+ 15 K-B4.

14 . . . P-QR4!!

From this point onwards play enters the fourth dimension. If 15 NxQ N-K5+ 16 K-B6 B-Q4 is mate.

15 NxPII Vacating QN5 for his king, so

own queen en prise, but don't panic. If 16 ... QxQ 17 N-B6+ and 17 ... KxN BxP+ or 17 . . . KxP 18 B-R6+ reclaims the queen with a winning game. 16 . . N-Q2I+ 17 K-N5 QxQ Now that there are no B-R6+ possibilities (cf above note) 18 BxP CxR 19 K-R6!! Threatening mate in one (N-B6) 20 NxRI N×N Avoiding the trap of the century (the last one of course), 20 BxN B-B5+1 21 BxB RxB! (eliminating the vital bishop) 22 RxQ R-Q3 mate. Nice one, NNI 20 . . . P-B2 Better than 20 . . . RxN 21 BxN mate P-B4 22 B-K3 RxN 24 B-R7+ K-B2 21 PxN 23 B-QN5IQxR 25 B-B5 Now threatening from a new angle, namely B-Q6+ promoting the pawn with mate. R-Q17 DIAGRAM The only move was 25 . . . B-B1! when White has to take perpetual checks on N6 and R7 26 K~R7!!Resigns. He cannot stop B-N6 mate, or indeed 27 B

now the queen capture is threatened.

15 . . . Q-R4+ 16 N-K5!! In case you didn't notice, White just left his

-Q6 + RxB 28 P-N8Q mate.

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

In a strange sort of way the decisive card on this deal, played in Six Diamonds at both tables of a match, was West's 4 of diamonds

Dealer South Love all

A K 8 6 3

V K 4

D 2

A 0 10 6 3

A 0 10 6 3

Dealer South Love all

A K 8 6 3

V K 4

D 2

A 0 10 6 3

A 0 10 6 3

A 0 10 6 3

A 10 8 6 5

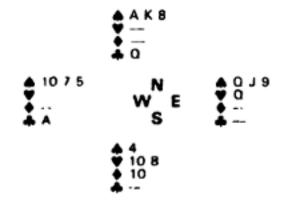
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A 8

At the first table the bidding went:

South's Five Clubs, assuring his partner that there would not be two losers in this suit, was quite a good idea.

West led the King of clubs and then, to reduce heart ruffs, switched to the 4 of diamonds South took one heart ruff, then played off trumps, to arrive at this ending:



The 10 of trumps exerted a typical double squeeze, and everyone seemed content

But West's switch to the 4 of trumps was a mirage, as the defender at the other table realised. If South set out to ruff hearts, the 4 of diamonds would force the Jack and declarer would not be able to ruff twice. So West played a stronger defence – a spade at trick two, destroying the entries needed for a squeeze.

TERENCE REESE

Stamp



Sea birds and coastal views in the Isle of Man provide the designs of a new series of low-value definitive stamps being issued by the Manx Post Office for ordinary use. The series comprises 12 values ranging from 1p to 18p. The 11p stamp (above) shows shags on the coast of the Calf of Man, the small island which lies off the south-west tip of Man. The designs are the work of a Douglas artist, John H. Nicholson, RI, who has designed many other stamps, as well as coins and banknotes, for the Isle of Man. This is the third definitive series to be issued since 1973, when the Manx Post Office became an Independent authority and introduced its own stamps.

C. W. HILL

Quiz

1. What is apostasy?

- 2 What is the scientific name for the bee?
- 3. What are the seven deadly sins?
- 4. What is topiary?
- In Roman mythology, who is considered the goddess of Spring?
- What is allurophobia?

- 7. Who is a misoneist?
- 8. What is a googol?
- 9. What does a sphygmomanometer measure?
- 10. Who is a myrmidon?

er's orders.

If measures blood pressure.
 One who blindly executes his lead-

ZOTOS.

7. One who hates change. 8. The number 1 followed by 100 6. Fear of cats.

shapes. 5. Maia.

ger, Gluttony, Envy and Sloth.
4. The art of clipping and trimming trees, shrubs, etc., into ordamental

3. They are Pride, Avarice, Lust, An-

to another. 2. Apis.

1. It is a revolt by an individual or party from one form of opinion or doctrine

VH2MEH8









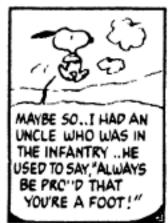














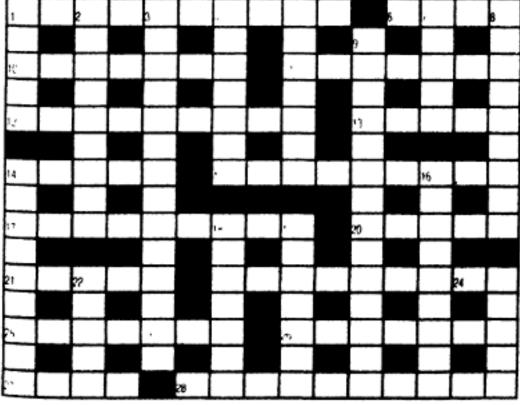






Sunday crossword

No. 4



ACROSS:

- 1 A male print, possibly, for this legislative body (10)
- 6 Does this branch of a hill range incite one? (4)
- 10 Such an acquaintance is not necessarily agreeable (7)
- 11. A hot sum, strangely, for these elephant keepers (7)
- 12 Vehicles surround the inset, upset, to find containers (9) 13 Some of the marrow I peddled was cleaned. (5)
- 14. To be sketched looks strained. (5)

- 15 Puss mixed up in one company could lead to distrust (9)
- 17. Treat blue badly, it can be pronounced (9)
- 20 He seems to have mastered the art of getting the show going (5)
- 21 Do these containers for honey give you a rash? (5)
- 23 Flat raga? Right—Leads you to an ungeometrical square (9)
- 25 Former metre disjointed, no happy medium (7)
- 26 Part of the lamb lingers on, at a strolling pace (7)
- 27 Therefore, the Burmese dagger could give you a fizzy drink (4)
- 28. This laughter is not fatal, however (10)

DOWN:

- 1 Could this sudden fright be due to the musical god? (5)
- The communist, German and worker all together could be superfluous.
- 3 Unhappily, Sir Cade is noisy---what peculiarities! (14)
- 4 City thugs, these crocidiles? (7)
- 5 I see Ms N, perhaps, as retributive justice (7)
- 7. To opt for someone pleasantly rounded? (5)
- 8. Dire scene, unfortunately, at the swelling place (9) 9. Always late in Wonderland? (3, 5, 6)
- 14. More than one female offspring hates drug madly. (9)
- Coin, ingot? Strangely, an assumed name (9)
- 18 Been wet badly in the middle. (7)
- 19 To issue from a wild manatee? (7)
- 22. Devotee lost tails, got mixed up and elected (5)
- 24. Fumes, because the east is in tatters (5)

Solutions to Sumar Crossword No. 3

1. Miracles 5 Tensed 10 Savouries 11 Ogres 12 Reels 13 The plague 14. Staffed 16. Shears 19. Assays 21 Potable 23 Branching 25 Canoe 26 Urari 27 Tremulous 28. Either 29 Ascended.

DOWN:

1. Mistress 2. Reviewals 3 Clues 4 Evicted 6 Emollient 7 Shrug 8. Dispel Asters 15. Franchise 17 Robin Hood 18 Reversed 20 Skirts 21. Piglets 22. Obtuse 24 Apart 25 Orude

Compiled by Rita Tewari

THE PLAN TO REMOVE DARBARA SINGH



Rajiv Gandhi. plans to remove Darbara Singh?

ON 1 May Mrs Gandhi made a statement in Lucknow that President's Rule would not be imposed in Punjab. That, of course, does not mean that the removal of Darbara Singh from the chief ministership of Punjab was not considered by the Prime Minister. In fact, such a formula was seriously examined in Delhi in the last week of April and a draft notification prepared. And the prime mover of this formula was Mr Rajiv Gandhi. Even the Punjab dissidents stepped up their activities after meeting Mr Rajiv Gandhiin Delhi recently. But at the last moment Mrs Gandhi herself abandoned the plan. Why? Though no reasons were given for this, according to some senior Congress(1) leaders the Prime Minister was



Darbara Singh: moves to oust

against the removal of Mr Darbara Singh because she did not want to strengthen the hands of the Akalis by removing the chief minister. Besides, she did not want to encourage Congress(I) dissidents in Punjab. What did the formula consist of? According to knowledgeable sources the draft said that the Assembly would be suspended and President's Rule imposed; new chief minister would be elected a few weeks after the suspension of the Assembly and the new chief minister would be Mr Amarendra Singh Patiala; the Akalis would support the new government from outside and would also be welcome to participate in the government; finally, Chandigarh would be given to Punjab.

SON VS FATHER



Suresh Ram: wooing the Congress(1)

SERIOUS differences have surfaced between Babu Jagjivan Ram and his son Suresh Ram. The reason: Suresh Ram is opposed to his father's friendly attitude towards the Lok Dal. Suresh Ram has, in fact, made it clear that he is not only opposed to Chaudhury Charan Singh but also to the president of the Democratic Socialist Party, Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna. In fact, both Mr Suresh Ram and Mr Brij Mohan, the general secretary of the Congress(Jagjivan) are against the idea of the Congress(J) merging with the Lok Dal even if Babuji is made the president. Meanwhile, Suresh Ram con-

Meanwhile, Suresh Ram continues to woo the Congress(I). Recently, he met Mr Bhajan Lal (Suresh Ram is a close friend of the Haryana chief minister) just before his visit to the USA. According to sources, Suresh Ram is keen on entering the Congress(I) and Mr Bhajan Lal has promised him that he would try and make his entry into the ruling party possible.

AICC(I)'S (NON) WORKING PRESIDENT

THROUGHOUT the two-day session of the Uttar Pradesh Congress(I) Committee at Kanpur on 30 April and 1 May, no mention was made of the working president of the AICC(I), Mr Kamlapati Tripathi, who lay seriously ill after an operation at Agra. Not only is Mr Tripathi the working president of the all India party, but hails from UP. The plight of AICC(I) general secretary, Mr Chandulal Chandrakar, and the UPCC(I) president Mr Sukhdeo Prasad, was similar. The fact that Mr Rajiv Gandhi was no ordinary party general secretary was demonstrated when in the beginning of the session, he alone was garlanded; the "other" general secretary, Mr Chandrakar, was totally ignored on this occassion.



Kamlapati Tripathi: ignored

MRS GANDHI: 'NON-ALIGNED'?

THE May Day rally organised by the Congress(I) at Kanpur was perhaps unprecedented in its own way. The main speaker, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, soon after addressing the working class rally, rushed off to address the golden jubilee function of the Uttar Pradesh Merchants' Chamber of Commerce. Perhaps this was the best way of demonstrating her status as the chairperson of the non-aligned movement. After all, why should Mrs Gandhi be aligned with the toiling people alone, even if it be May Day?

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SLAM AND THE GUN





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The \$250 million scooter

In just twelve years, Bajaj Auto has earned India way over \$250 million in hard currencies. In fact, the total is now nearing \$275 million.

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Smokers Toothpaste is a special ayurvedic formula with natural oils and <u>Sinclova 4</u>. It safely cleans the embarassing stains, just like a dentist would. And cares for your teeth and gums





Ladakh

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The initial impression that President Zia-ul Hag of Pakistan was a mere simpleton and a front man for the junta has changed he has now emerged as a shrewd political operator. Tariq Ali, in an extract from his book, Can Pakistan survive?, writes that Zia cleverly used Islam and the army to consolidate his rule and that announcement of elections within 90 days of the declaration of martial rule was a deliberate misstatement to stifle public outcry. However, Zia's army rule has brought to a head all the contradictions of the Pakistani state. Lack of political democracy, economic inequality and oppression of minority communities have become deeply embedded in the consciousness of a mass which is increasingly questioning the very basis of the state.

Page 18

A sudden spurt in the share prices of two corporate giants of the country--DCM and Escorts-early this year was the beginning of one of the most dramatic attempts to dislodge the families managing the companies with minority shares. And the person buying the shares was the UK-based industrialist Swrai Paul. Paul's takeover bid not only threatened the families controlling DCM and Escorts but also the Tatas and the Birlas, who, by the same logic, are also vulnerable to any determined takeover bid. A blow by blow account of Swrai Paul's gambit by Tooshar Pandit.

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NEXT WEEK Is Datta Samant finished?

An in-depth report on the collapse of the textile strike

The Divine Lover

By KHUSHWANT SINGH

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to work in. Fix the fluorescent lamp only in places where you want the entire room lit up for long periods of Δ_t time.

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It's a new-look milky lamp that's coated by an improved process. To give uniformly soft and pleasant light. Use it in open luminaires in those

areas where you want soft, glare-free light.







thilled indien novelbold name

Philips Argenta Superlux Lamp

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spotlight. Without a
reflector it lights up the
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the room in a soft, even,
indirect light
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wall hung with
paintings, a large
arrangement of
plants or pottery
and so on.



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lamp for every purpose.



Kum Kum

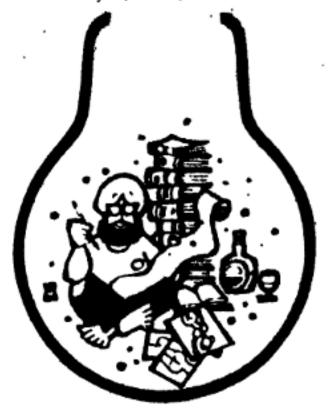
air, green-eyed, and impeccably accoutred in clothes to match her complexion, hazel-brown hair or her eyes, she looks the butter-would-not-melt-in-her-mouth kind of girl. But she is as tough as Delhi's famous Iron Pillar and has weathered quite as many storms in 30 years of her life as Harsha's pillar has withstood the elements in 1,500 years. Pardonable exaggeration after you get to know her. She has been brusquely ordered out of the room by Chaudhury Charan Singh. The late Jyotirmoy Basu was so riled by her questions that he threatened to send for the police. Amongst her other dubious claims to fame was being named along with Sanjay Gandhi in a case of contempt of court.

It is evident that Kum Kum Chadha has packed the 12 years of her life as reporter with a lot of drama. She has a penchant for needling politicians till they ex-



Kum Kum Chadha: dramatic career

plode with anger and give her the kind of copy she wants. She compiled some of these explosions in her book The Crucifixion. Two years ago she turned to exploring the seamier side of life: murder, rape and petty larceny. Her laboratories were Indian prisons, chiefly Tihar jail. She interviewed Kairon's killers before their execution, has talked to Mrs Jain's murderers, Sunil Batra (the bank robbery convict) and needless to say, hangmen Fagira and Kallu. All this she has now put together in a welldocumented book which gives spine-chilling accounts of tortures inflicted by the police to extort confessions and sordid prison conditions where those who cannot afford to square warders suffer inhuman degradation but those who can, get their scotch, biryani, imported cigarettes, women and boys. The Indian Jail: A Contemporary Document has been published this week.



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

Paper waste

I get 12 daily papers delivered to my doorstep every morning. I spend about half an hour on the first one and an average of five minutes each on the others. For the last 15 years the newspaper companies I have worked for paid my paper bills. Now that I have to shell out the money from my own pocket, I have to cut down my list drastically. Since there is not much difference between them, I have decided to take three: one which is delivered earliest; the second because it gives a little more to the opposition point of view; and the third because it carries a crossword puzzle on which I happily waste many precious half hours. I won't miss any of the others; only my servants will grumble because they make a tidy sum every month selling them to the raddiwala.

I am sure most readers of Indian magazines and newspapers will agree with me that what is dished out to us is stale diet listed from menus which have not changed over the years. Nine-tenths of their contents are politics and the remaining one-tenth garbage.

I also subscribe to a dozen weekly and fortnightly magazines. I spend an average of ten minutes on each of them. Now that I have to pay for them myself. I have to reduce their number as well. This has proved surprisingly easy: I am dropping all those that emanate from Bombay because they have become a kind of incestuous journalism. Having run out of ideas they write about each other with the same people appearing again and again cracking the same kind of stale witticisms. I will miss seeing the nasty things they have to say about me. But more than I, it will be the pretty masseuse ladies of the Taj Health Club who will miss them. I offload these journals at the club. The girls love reading film gossip and relish Devyani Chaubal's biryani English. They will also miss the little money they make by selling them to the raddiwala.

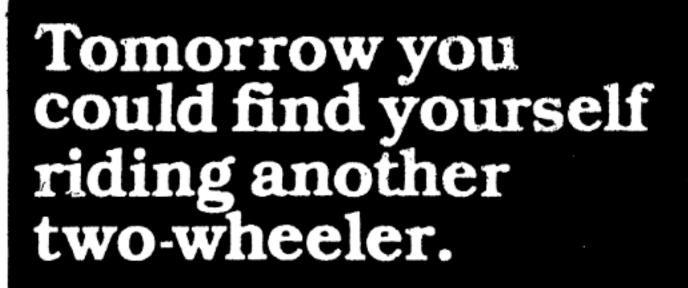
This does not apply to the English and American magazines which cost me a tidy sum every week. I read most of them from cover to cover, file them in my shelves and take pains to prevent my servants from selling them. I am sure most readers of Indian magazines and newspapers will agree with me that what is dished out to us is stale diet listed from menus which have not changed over the years. Ninetenths of their contents are politics and the remaining one-tenth gar-

bage.

Ministers complain that our journals do not give adequate coverage to the government's achievements. Opposition parties complain that they give too much coverage to speeches of ministers and too little to what they have to say. My complaint is that they are a deadly bore. I suffer from politico-phobia and our papers are plagued with politics. I look forward to the day when I can say like Thomas Jefferson, "I do not take a single newspaper, nor read one a month, and I feel myself infinitely the happier for it."

Peasant sense

Two Haryanavi peasants got into an argument over which side of the chapatti, the dry or the one smeared with ghee, would fall face upwards if tossed in the air. Musaddi Lal said it would be the chopree-smeared; Bholu Ram insisted it would be the dry. They made a wager of one rupee and tossed a chapatti in the air; it fell with the "Didn't I tell you so," exclaimed Musaddi Lal triumphantly. "Now hand over the rupee." "No," replied Bholu Ram, "that is because I smeared the *ghee* on the wrong side."



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Safety Through Technology



The latest plan to improve the Congress(I)'s image

f you have money to invest, you cannot do better than to put it into a factory making flags. For, unannounced, the 20-point programme we have all been hearing about for so long seems to have aquired another point: waving the flag. Not the national flag, but the party flag. A circular issued by the Congress (I) headquarters to its units, calls on all members of the party to fly their flag atop houses, cars, cycles and elsewhere.

According to the circular, instructions are at the behest of Mrs Gandhi, though the originators could well be Rajiv Gandhi and his backroom boys who have been working, with computers and public agents, on ways to improve the Congress (I) image. Apparently, the purpose of this exercise is to impress upon the public and the opposition political parties how widely supported the Congress (I)

There can be no doubt that other parties in all probability will respond in a similar manner and ask their members to fly their own party flags. One cannot forget the "flag war" among political parties in Kerala, with each trying to fly its flag higher than that of any other, and the loss of life and limb this caused as one flag-bearer sought to beat the other.

Mrs Gandhi's instructions may do worse and create even a law and order problem, with political sympathies easily identifiable by the flags they choose to fly. The hapless administration in the Congress (I) run states will be discriminatory & Congress (I) bulldog-the flying of and the population in villages may have to choose between flying the Congress (I) flag or facing the consequences of being openly antigovernment, because the flag may be the determining factor.

. . 12

An uncertain society as the Indian one is, one more division will be drawn. There will be "better citizens" with the Congress(I) flag and the lesser ones with none or other flags. Some will feign support to the Congress (I) and fly its flag to gain the concessions which will go with these expressions of loyalty.

No doubt, all this is in preparation for the elections which are due in January 1985, but may be held earlier. And in this age of gimmickery, the "think-tank" of Mrs Gandhi or her son, and the publicists around them, may come up with more than flags—there are bound to be campaign buttons and stickers-though it is unlikely that children will be lined up to be patted by the candidates as is customary in the US elections.

The Congress flag does represent sacrifices and sufferings of the partymen; most of them are either dead or driven out of the party. Now there are either Neroes or zeros who have nothing to do with the party's heritage or what was once its purpose.

But what is not realised is that every hamlet, village and town may come to be divided into loyal citizens displaying the Congress (I) flags and the 'disloyal' ones not doing so. And since it has become a fashion with the Congress (I) leaders to pronounce judgements on the patriotism of their critics on the basis of raising slogans like "Indira mata ki jai,"—Mr C. M. Stephen, the Congress (I) secretary-general, who has probably more to hide than the rest of his partymen, is the Congress (I) flag may become synonymous with support to the nation. It is within our knowledge how a Congress president had raised the slogan, "Indira is India, and India is Indira" and Mrs Gandhi had come to like it."

The flaunting of the Congress (I) flag may also revive an old controversy over the flag's similarity with the national flag. Both are a horizontal tricolour of deep saffron (kesari) at the top, white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. The only difference is that the national flag's white band has the Asoka *chakra* ir. navy blue in the centre and the Congress (I) flag has either the open palm, or, lately, the traditional charkha. From a distance both flags look alike and can easily be mistaken for the other. And since one represents authority, misuse by flying the other is possible. Also, the likeness of the Congress (I) flag to the national flag is unfair to other political parties.

As it is, there is much misuse of the national flag. Nehru once issued instructions to the central, and state ministers not to fly the national flag except on special occasions on their cars. His argument was that it was not fair of them to flaunt authority in this manner. For a long time his instructions carried weight but slowly ministers reverted to their old ways of flying the flag on their cars.

In villages and small towns, the Congress (I) minions have been flying the party flag on their jeeps and cars which they have come to acquire illegally. The policemen have to show them the same preference which they extend to the ruling party MLAs and MPs. There are scores of examples to indicate that the policemen have been punished for not showing respect to those who had sported the Congress (I) flag on their vehicles.

India is a country of symbolism: foreheads are marked to show to which caste the particular person belongs, a string of beads is worn to show piety. Devaraj Urs, the late chief minister of Karnataka, had eight rings on different fingers to invoke the blessings of a particular godess. Likewise, the Congress (I) flag will increasingly symbolise authority and obedience and if Mrs' Gandhi can allow the impression of being a "devi" to spread, the Congress (I) flag may become a standard of a Hindu diety...

When the Janata government was in power, Mr Charan Singh, the then home minister, toyed with the idea of banning the use of any flag that was similar to the national flag. Again Mr Stephen, the then Congress (I) leader in the Lok Sabha, was the first to say that his party would oppose the move tooth and nail. Mr Charan Singh did not have adequate support or even time in office to bring about the proposed legislation. But he had a valid point and this should be pursued now.



Cleansing CM

The cover story, Riding High (24 April), made interesting reading. Ramakrishna Hegde has the proverbial Midas touch that turns everything into gold. With the zeal and enthusiasm of a prophet, he has embarked on the mission of bringing Karnataka back on the tracks. The Lokayukt Bill, the Anti-Defection Bill, the Zilla Parishad Bill and the Bangalore conclave prove that he means business.

Khadri Shamanna was right in his assessment of Ramakrishna Hegde's performance. The new Karnataka's CM has undertaken the task of cleansing the government of corrupt bureaucrats. He has also introduced a number of bills in the state Assembly which will certainly help the common man in the long run.

Kuntal Sen, Bangalore

Brajesh Mishra, Rourkela

This has reference to the interview with Ramakrishna Hegde ('I should be in office only with the support of the people'). The conversation with the chief minister brought out the qualities which account for his popularity in Karnataka.

Mr Hegde was cool, calm and crystal clear about his party and people. His comments on Bangarappa was just. N. Seshadri, Tiruchirappalli

The interview brought out the honesty in Ramakrishna Hegde. Like a real Mahatma, he has started weeding out corruption from the government. P.P. Pai, Bombay

Mr Bangarappa is not different from those politicians whose sole aim is to grab power. He cannot fool the populace with his rhetoric. Sujat Kamal, Lucknow

The interview with Ramakrishna Hegde was indeed revealing. It is difficult to find such politicians today. Tanvir Salim, Aligarh

Are we still uncivilised?

I fully agree with Kuldip Nayar that Lindians are not a civilized people (24 April). Prior to independence the Britishers were blamed for instigating communal passions, but even after years of attaining freedom we have not been able to curb the outbreak of riots. Whom do we blame now? Razi Ahmad, New Delhi

Mr Nayar had rightly pointed out that the carnage in Assam only proves that we are still uncivilised. I would appreciate some more articles on this subject by him.

Bhupen Bose, Jamshedpur

Kuldip Nayar was wrong when he labelled the Indians as uncivilised. He has failed to grasp the full implications of the Assam movement.

The Indian citizens residing in Assam had given up most of their possessions to the migrants from erstwhile East Pakistan. Today they are a starving lot. While condemning violence, I wish to assert that nothing has been done for them. The central government is solely responsible for the present unrest in Assam.

Purna Narayan Sinha, New Delhi

Those who indulge in violence and vandalism in the name of religion and meaningless political idiosyncrasies are nothing but uncivilised. Only an upright man like Kuldip Nayar has the courage to say so.

Nisar Mirdhe, Bijapur

While appreciating Mr Nayar's article, I would like to remind him that the present-day rulers are responsible for turning human beings into uncivilised creatures. Genuine grievances were not met and this has aggravated the turbulence in Assam.

C. T. Vairavan, Madras

Mr Nayar was wrong in his assessment of the nature of violence in Assam. The riots that have taken place in Assam recently were actually between the Assamese and a portion of the non-Assamese irrespective of whether they are Hindus or Muslims.

Dipak Sen, Hailakandi (Assam)

Facts corroborate Kuldip Nayar's view that Indians are not civilised. Before the British took over India, chaos prevailed in Indian society. It was the British rulers who established the rule of law.

B. M. Mondal, Jadurhati (West Bengal)

Democracy has turned Indians into an uncivilised lot. Greedy politicians have set one religion against another with the result that communal riots often break out. We need an able dictator to set things right.

Bijay Krishna Deb, Margherita

Mr Nayar was right when he dubbed Indians as an uncivilised race. The recent riots in Assam have tarnished the secular image of India.

S. M. Baqibillah, Calcutta

The present socio-economic crisis is responsible for the outbreak of riots. The politicians are ever busy guarding their own interests. Moreover, the illiterate Indian is easily swayed by pompous rhetoric. They fall an easy prey to the evil designs of politicians. What we need is a Mahatma Gandhi C. R. Ravindran, Coimbatore

Illiteracy is at the root of all communal violence. Education is the solution to such recurrent barbaric riots.

Roop Kumar, Jamshedpur

The heading as well as the article by Kuldip Nayar is illogical and unfounded for the following reasons:

1. The barbaric activities perpetrated by a minority, say about 5,000 people, do not change the overall complexion of the Indian civilisation which is based on non-violence and brotherhood.

Miscreants always belong to a single race. It is wrong to classify them in terms of religion.

3. The article is based on wrong observations. In this context I would like to remind Mr Nayar of the bloodshed during the crusades in Europe or during the Russian revolution. The carnage in Assam is nothing when compared to the violence of the Chinese cultural revolution.

Balaram Banerjee, Murshidabad

Imran: Know-all?

The interview with Imran Khan was indeed absorbing ("I grew up with a complex that I was ugly," 17 April). It was surprising to learn that Imran could offer his comments on such a variety of topics.

Kurban Ukani, Calcutta

The interview helped us to know more of the personal life of the great allrounder. The questions put forward by Ms Singh were intelligent.

Harvinder Singh, New Delhi

I was feel up with cricket. But the interview with Imran Khan was an exception since he spoke on everything except cricket. An excellent effort by

SUNDAY once again.

Anil Jha, Patna

The interview was disappointing. Imran had doubts even about the ability of Mahatma Gandhi, He is definitely biased and Sunday should not waste its pages on such an interview. V. V. Narasingh, Bhubaneswar

The interview bored us beyond Sun-DAY's imagination. Most of Imran's answers lacked depth since he was unaware of what he was talking about. His reputation is confined to cricket and hence he is fit to comment on that subject alone.

N. Krishnan, Trivandrum

This has reference to Khushwant Singh's How to lance the communal virus (3 April). Mr Singh should have written that all places of worship should be kept under the control of the desence forces and not under the guardianship of religious teachers. It is the latter that it responsible for stoking the flames of communalism. Such is the situation not only in our country but throughout the world. The role of the press in providing a solution to such burning topics is highly essential.

S. Sarwan Singh, Jorhat, Assem

If, as Khushwant Singh puts it, "mischievous interpretations" of historical events is really the cause of Hindu-Muslim animosity, it is better to ban the study of history itself. The government is indifferent to the sufferings of the people. People of integrity and moral courage, rather than selfish and scheming politicians, should dominate the political scene of the country. Zafre Alam Khan, Aligarh

Khushwant Singh's article was encouraging. Communal riots are a disgrace; anti-socials should be firmly dealt with. Inter-caste marriage is one method of dealing with the crisis.

Tanvir Salim, Aligarh

In her article, South: Casteist rather than communal, Anita Pratap's claim that "the growth of the RSS in Kerala has resulted in an erosion in the communist ranks" is rather surprising. During my last visit to Kerala, I had a talk with a number of people from the RSS and the CPI(M) and learnt that the strength of the RSS was diminishing. For example, in Tellicherry, which is an RSS stronghold, a CPI(M) candidate won by a margin of more than 17,000 votes in the last election. The future of the RSS in Kerala is bleak.

Moreover, Anita Pratap wrongly stated that Shree Narayana Guru mobilised the ezhavas. He was against

caste discrimination. C. P. Rajendran, New Delhi

Seema Guha holds the BJP responsible for the communal clashes in Assam. But the Prime Minister was equally responsible. While addressing some rallies in Muslim dominated areas in the Nowgong district during her election campaign in February, she concluded her speech by saying Khuda Hafiz instead of the patriotic Jai Hind. Such speeches incited communal clashes in Assam.

Devajyoti Hazarika, Digboi

In his interview to Udayan Sharma, Lala Harmohanlal stated that "the history of Islam has been written with swords." This erroneous statement stems from his ignorance; people like him even distort the meaning of the Koran to prove that it is a Muslim's duty to wage a holy war.

The VHP leaders speak explicitly

The VHP leaders speak explicitly against the Muslims. Why doesn't someone protest against the conversion of thousands of Muslims by the VHP leaders in Rajasthan in the name of sudhikaran or paravartan? Mr Mohan

The San All States of the San All States

Joshi, the organisation secretary, Rajasthan Vishwa Hindu Parishad, stated that "Muslims tortured Indians-Hindus from the (time of the) kingdom of Ghouri to Aurangseb." It is true that Aurangzeb perpetrated excesses in the name of religion but it will be wrong to conclude that Islam directs its followers to do such things. When the Aryans entered India they were also contemptuous of Panis and Dasas and tried to annihilate the original inhabitants of the land. Should we blame Hinduism for this? Emperor Babar, Dara Shukoh, Alauddin of Bengal, Hussain Shah, Jainul Abedin of Kashmir were the notable Muslim rulers who followed a policy of universal toleration.

Today India is passing through a crucial phase. Now is the time to resolve our differences and clear away the maze of distorted ideas that we have inherited from the past. Sk. Sadar Naycem, Calcutta

Rajendra Sareen's analysis, Indian Muslims: Somewhere between pampered and persecuted, was an eyeopener. But while being touched by his sincerity, I found that he had glossed over certain important points.

It is worth noting that since independence, the Muslim leadership in India has failed to condemn the unprovoked aggression against the country by Pakistan. The objective is clear: the Muslims hope to establish, once again, an Islamic raj in India. It is indeed a pity that the average Muslim still believes that he is born to rule the country. The Muslims have refused to join the national mainstream. They cling tenaciously to their own civil laws and condemn family planning unequivocally.

P. N. Natarajan, Madras

The special issue of Sunday on communalism (3 April) was thought-provoking. Lala Harmohanlal, the general secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, said that he is opposed to conversions but not paravartan. Muslims and Christians also believe in paravartan. Is the Yishwa Hindu Parishad prepared to abolish the caste system? It is my challenge to Lala Harmohanlal to make a harijan the head of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham or any other Hindu religious mutt.

P. D. Samson, Chamarajanagar, Mysore

The special issue had aptly analysed the various causes behind outbreaks of communal riots in India. While writers like Seema Guha lay the blame squarely on the RSS and the BJP for the riots in Assem and elsewhere, hardly any columnist had accused the Muslim community, Even Khushwant Singh has ignored the fact that the Muslim community is rife with schisms; for instance, a fanatic sunni Muslim cannot tolerate a shia or ahmedi Muslim, not to speak of tolerating other religions. Let bold journals like Sunray teach these bigots to be more tolerant and consider other faiths as sacred as theirs. Dr Madan Lai, New Delhi

The interview with Arun Shourie.

(Life at and after Express, 17 April), offered a glimpse into the life of a great man. Sunday should concentrate on people like him rather than the present day politicians.

S. R. Bedami, Kanpur

Arun Shourie's views especially on Indian journalism are valuable for anyone in the profession. But he was not correct when he said that investigative journalism has exhausted itself. I still feel that a successful journalist should be investigative.

Vimal Jain, Lucknow

Arun Shourie's views on public interest litigation was particularly enlightening. I had the privilege of going through the judgement of the Supreme Court on Asiad labour. I found that nothing had been done for the victims. Arun Banerjee, Calcutta

The interview with Arun Shourie was absorbing. In the end Shourie emerges victorious while the so-called politicians of today stand exposed. Mr Goenka, who all through his life stood for values and the freedom of the press should not have succumbed to the pressures of dishonest politicians. K. G. Jayaprakash, Chowhghat (Kerala)

Arun Shourie has exposed his weakness in the interview. Throughout the conversation he has tried to prove his indispensability in the profession. He does admit that many journalists helped him in his numerous scoops, yet he never fails to blow his own trumpet. He claims to be the doyen of investigative journalism which is certainly not true.

Sikandar Ahmad, Delhi

Enough has been said and written about Arun Shourie and Indian Express. I would advise Sunday not to waste its precious pages on this multi-million dollar newspaper industry.

Ramanand Sharma, Bangalore

Any takers?

For a number of years I have been collecting advertisements, write-ups and articles from local and national newspapers. The collection includes advertisements covering pharmaceuticals, hotels, cosmetics, textile engineering products, electronics and electrical products, furnishings and many more including sales schemes, contests introduced by big and small manufacturers.

The articles cover subjects like marketing and advertising, management, industrial survey reports, financial news, company reports, humorous articles and a good number of cartoons. The collection runs into thousands and is divided into over 75 subjects. Those interested may write to me for details. Vijay Nagranee, 7, Newal Kishore Road, Hazratganj, Lucknow.



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LOOKING GLASS

Mrs Satpathy to come out of political wilderness

Mrs Nandini Satpathy seems to have missed the Congress(I) bus. Her quiet pleadings with the party high command to get back to the party she left in 1977 having failed, she is now trying to align herself with the Congress(S)-Democratic Socialist Party (DSP)-Rashtriya Congress alliance, whose leaders recently spoke of a merger. She is understood to have met the DSP lead-



Mrs Satpathy: no option

er, Mr Bahuguna, in New Delhi, and the Congress(S) leader, Mr Unnikrishnan, called on her during his recent visit to Bhubaneshwar. Mrs Satpathy's options are limited: she cannot join the united non-communist opposition party under the Janata banner in the state, with Mr Biju Patnaik as its leader, because of a personality clash. At one stage, she had discussed with her supporters the possibility of forming a state-based party, but did not pursue the idea. Now, she wants to associate with an all-Ir dia party to end her political isolation.

From minister to a filmstar

The general trend in the south is for filmstars to turn into politicians. In-Kerala the trend may be perpetuated by Malayalam actor Prem Nazir. But in Kerala one also notices an odd reversal of this trend. The Congress(I) transport minister Mr K.K. Balakrishnan has just completed a leading role in a feature-cumdocumentary film on the social reformer Ayankali. It was in Kerala again that a former minister and now an opposition MLA, Lonappan Nambadan starred in a film, though his was a minor role. It looks as if the twain have not only met but blended as well in Kerala.

Haryana dissidents resent CM's caucus

The Haryana dissidents have demanded Bhajan Lal's ouster. Among their list of grievances is the existence of an official caucus which "humiliates and insults" them. This caucus is, reportedly, headed by the principal secretary to the chief minister, Mr Brahmsaroop Ojha, who in his capacity as a senior official, heads many corporations and important government



Bhajan Laj: official caucus?

departments. He has things planned out so well that he has been wrangling a trip abroad every month. Besides him the caucus comprises the deputy principal secretary R.P. Rao, a DIG, CID, J.P. Atray and Devinder Sharma, the newly-appointed chairman of the forest development board who had lost the last election.

Darbara Singh's ouster inevitable



It seems as if the Punjab chief minister, Darbara Singh, is living on borrowed time. The irony is, that those very Akalis who have been demanding his ouster for quite some time are today his insurance policy. Although Mrs Gandhi does not appear to be happy with the way Darbara Singh has been tackling a rapidly deteriorating situation in Punjab she cannot throw

him out because that might be construed as a sign of the central government giving in to the Akali demands, and that will make the Akalis more aggressive. But once she succeeds in pacifying the Akalis the first head to roll in Punjab will be that of the present chief minister. A few others will also follow. For, some close aides of Mrs Gandhi are convinced that unless drastic changes are made in both the government and the party in the state, Punjab would go the Andhra and Karnataka way. But then, does Mrs Gandhi have that much of time to give her party in Punjab a new look?

Taj Mahal Hotel defers on tax payment

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), 1982-83, in its fourteenth report to the sixth Maharashtra Legislative Assembly, has drawn the attention of the state's social welfare and tourism department and asked why the Taj Mahal Hotel, Bombay, has not deposited Rs 6.75 lakhs as payment of its dues with the court. A notice had been issued to the hotel to pay Rs 6.75 lakhs as luxury tax. The hotel filed a writ petition in the Bombay High Court. The PAC says, "The huge amount is thus utilised by the hotel without paying interest. The committee is at a loss to know why, even after filing a writ petition in the High Court, the government's social welfare and tourism department, has not asked the management of the hotel to deposit the amount in the High Court."

Meghalaya government demands land back from the army

The ministry of defence is not keen to hand over the Shillong cantonment, situated in downtown area of the city, to the state government. The Meghalaya government, in the third week of April, had demanded the transfer of the cantonment areas to it as the state government wants to utilise the land for development projects. The ministry is also opposed to another demand of the state government that the ongoing work for another cantonment at Barapani on the Shillong-Gauhati road should be stopped and the land earmarked for the army's use there should be transferred to the government. The state home minister, Mr D. Lapang, is reported to have told the defence ministry that cantonment at Barapani will cause an influx of outsiders and thereby adversely effect the demographic profile of the tribal state.

MARIE MAN.

By TARIQ ALI

Pakistan is like Israel, an ideological state. Take out Judaism from Israel and it will collapse like a house of cards. Take Islam out of Pakistan and make it a secular state: it would collapse. For the past four years we have been trying to bring Islamic values to the country.

· General Zia-ul Haq, Chief Martial Law Administrator

ith the declaration of martial law by General Zia- ul Haq on 5 July 1977, the state had returned to its most primitive form. Once again the status quo could be preserved only by 'armed bodies of men'. It was as if Pakistan's entire history had turned full circle. General Ayub had seized power in 1958 to prevent elections: a mass movement led to his fall in 1969. His successor General Yahya agreed to allow the people the right to choose their own government: when they did so, he embarked on a bloody civil war to negate their choice, which led to the disintegration of the old state. Pakistan's military high command had suffered a devastating blow in Bengal; it waited five years before embarking on a new adventure. It was the large-scale rigging of the 1977 elections which provided the pretext.

It is true that the failure of Bhutto's populism laid the basis for Zia's coup, but there were additional factors at work. Of these, the most important was dissension within the officer corps. The generals acted partly to preempt a coup attempt by junior officers, many of whom were strongly infected by reactionary ideologies. There was never any real intention of permitting fresh elections on the old model. Zia's address to the nation on the evening of 5 July 1977 was a melange of duplicity and straightforward untruth:

"It must be quite clear to you now that when the political leaders failed to steer the country out of a crisis, it is an inexcusable sin for the armed forces to sit as silent spectators. It is, primarily, for this reason that the army perforce had to intervene to save the country...I would like to point out here that I saw no pros-

pects of a compromise between the People's Party and the PNA...It was feared that the failure of the PNA and PPP to reach a compromise would throw the country into chaos-... This risk could not be taken in view of the larger interests of the country...I want to make it absolutely clear that neither have I any political ambitions nor does the army want to be distracted from its profession of soldiering...My sole aim is to organise free and fair elections which would be held in October this year...I give a solemn assurance that I will not deviate from this schedule.'

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There are no details available of the discussions inside the army that preceded the July coup, but it was a known fact that the generals had a number of contingency plans at their disposal. Most of these were the direct result of US involvement with the Pakistan armed forces. One of these plans, Operation Wheeljam, designed to destabilise a civilian government, was similar to US sponsored projects in Chile during the Allende period. Bhutto was later to claim that the army and General

The Rawalpindi jail where Bhutto was imprisoned and (right) Gen Zia: for how long can the army rule?





Zia had 'played a prominent part in encouraging, aiding and manipulating events to exacerbate civil strife in order to overthrow the legal government.' Some of the evidence provided by Bhutto and confirmed by PNA leaders indicated that the army had decided to take over the country soon after the March 1977 elections.

A key demand of the PNA during its negotiations with the PPP following the March elections was that the crudely manufactured cases against Pathan and Baluch leaders be unconditionally withdrawn, the detainees released and the army recalled to barracks in Baluchistan. Bhutto finally agreed to these demands, but was told by Zia and the senior corps commanders that the army would simply refuse to accept such a settlement. A few days prior to the coup, Zia attended a meeting of PPP and PNA leaders with a lengthy document arguing that 'secessionists' and 'traitors' should not be released. At the same time, the generals insisted that unless an immediate agreement was reached between the government and the opposition parties they would not be able to control the situation. Bhutto was effectively trapped by this pincer movement.

In the weeks before the coup, a series of desperate meetings was organised with the Saudi Arabian ambassador, through whom the Pakistan army and the United States regularly exchanged information. There were also unconfirmed reports that Bhutto, accompanied by his military aide General Imtiaz, had secretly crossed the border into Afghanistan for a meeting with Soviet officials The army's plans, however, had been carefully worked out. It got rid of Bhutto and placed him under 'protective custody', at the very moment when he had reached an agreement with the PNA. Zia's speech announcing martial law stated the exact opposite. The high command, moreover, was perfectly well aware that immediate elections were not on the agenda. Zia's reference to elections within ninety days was a deliberate misstatement, designed to reassure a few dissenters within the armed forces: in both the navy and the air force, there was a reeling that new elections were both desirable and necessary. It was also aimed at stifling any public outcry and dividing the political parties. On every count, the tactic was successful. It is possible that if the army had been totally confident that a low-key election would result in an electoral victory for the extreme rightwing parties, Zia, Chishti and Iqbal—the leading advocates of a coup—could have been restrained. It soon became obvious, however, that any new election would not produce the results desired by the army...

On 28 July 1977, Bhutte was released from house-arrest. The PPP leader did not waste a single mo-



PPP supporters burn a bus after the hanging of Bhutto

ment, but immediately began a tour of all four provinces. What disconcerted the martial law authorities was the large crowds that came to his meetings in the Punjab. It was clear that Bhutto and the PPP would win the two most populous provinces: Punjab and Sind. The army high command had discussed, but rejected, the possibility of killing Bhutto at the time of the coup itself. They were later to regret this omission. At all events, on 3 September 1977 Bhutto was arrested and charged with 'conspiracy to murder'. The alleged victim was a former member of the PPP, Ahmed Raza Kasuri, whose political instability was a byword in Pakistani political circles.

A judicial farce now commenced, during the course of which it became clear that the generals and a majority of the judges were determined to rid themselves of the 'turbulent' PPP leader. The Pakistani judiciary was not known for its impartiality. It had accepted Ayub's martial law in 1958. It had accepted Bhutto's dictates, authorising the proscription of the National Awami Party and tamely accepting the establishment of a Special Tribunal at Hyderabad to try detained NAP leaders, denounced in the PPP-controlled media as secessionists' and 'traitors'. It enjoyed very little respect amongst the population as a whole. Very few judges were regarded as upholders of the law. When their lordships of the Supreme Court invoked the dubious, few observers expressed surprise. The Supreme Court had a long history of legalising regimes which violated every tenet of the Constitution which the judges were sworn to

Bhutto's trial provided the first major test for the military regime. The mechanics of how Zia both secured the judgment he wanted and managed to avoid generalised dis-

content have yet to be analysed fully. A number of useful articles and books on the trial and subsequent execution of Bhutto have already been published, but it is not intended to recount here the sordid details of the judicial farce that was enacted in Pakistan over the nineteen months from September 1977 to April 1979, since these can be studied elsewhere. What is far more instructive is to examine the political processes which enabled the army to tighten its grip on the country. Undoubtedly, the major obstacle standing between the military dictatorship and political stability, however temporary, was the person of Zulfigar Ali Bhutto. It was not simply that Bhutto might win any democratic electoral contest. What frightened the corps commanders was that Bhutto alive represented a permanent potential alternative to military rule. At the first sign of unrest, the rural and urban masses would have turned to the country's foremost populist politician. Few had doubts as to who would emerge victorious in any frontal clash between the army and the masses, with a Bhutto-led PPP at the helm.

eneral Zia-ul Haq had been dismissed by both friends and enemies as a simpleton, mere front-man for a junta, who could be easily swept aside. What such views ignored was the fact that the state had precisely required a 'low-profile' leader. Appearances in this case were deceptive. Zia emerged as a shrewd political operator, who knew when to assert his authority. His handling of the country's political parties revealed a Machiavellian streak, which surprised the politicians who allowed themselves to be manipulated. Throughout the period of Bhutto's trials, the Chief Martial Law Administrator maintained the

pretence that he was ultimately going to permit elections to take place. This was necessary to keep the support of the political parties grouped under the PNA umbrella. While a few parties did withdraw from the PNA, the majority accepted martial law and their leaders accepted posts in Zia's re-organised federal cabinet in 1978. Thus, when Bhutto was hanged on 4 April 1979, the act was defended by civilian politicians serving in a military government.

From 1977 to 1979, the generals continuously reneged on Zia's initial promise to organise fresh elections. In 1978, Zia informed a bewildered nation that he had been overpowered by a dream in which a voice (presumably that of the Almighty) had suggested that elections were un-Islamic. This, of course, was nothing but a cynical attempt to man... ipulate mass consciousness in rural areas where superstition is rife. Zia had not dreamed anything. He had been informed in no uncertain terms by the six corps commanders-Generals Chishti, Iqbal, Jehanzeb, Sarwar Khan, Ghulam Hassan and Ghulam Mohammed—that elections could not be held. It was these six generals, in addition to Zia and Arif. who constituted the highest decisionmaking body in the country during the two critical years that followed the declaration of martial law. Iqbal and Jehanzeb are said to have warned Zia that if he allowed political parties to dominate Pakistan's political stage once again, he would confront a mutiny by junior officers from within the army.

A similar argument was utilised to ensure unanimity among the seven generals on the decision to execute Bhutto. Zia was to be given full backing to take all necessary steps to control any discontent that might result from killing the country's last elected prime minister. In the event, the much-feared spontaneous upsurge did not materialise. Bhutto's death undoubtedly traumatised the vast majority of the population, but the masses saw little reason at this stage to risk their own lives. The limited response by no means implied support for the army; it merely demonstrated the lack of political organisation at the grass-roots level. But the military high command was certainly emboldened by its success. It soon evicted the civilian politicians from the cabinet, and sought to rule once again in league with its old friend, the civil bureaucracy (though on this occasion with the bureaucrats in an extremely subordinate position).

In order to quell discontent with continued military rule in the armed services—the navy and air force were reportedly restive—and to demonstrate that even in death Bhutto had not lost his hold over the masses, the martial law regime permitted



Bhutto: has he been silenced?

non-party elections to local bodies in September 1979. All the major political parties contested the local elections, under appropriate disguises. PPP candidates postured as 'friends of the people' on printed posters; 'for an honest leadership' was the signature-tune of the fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami (which interestingly enough did not utilise Islam in its appeal); the discredited Muslim League (now an unrepresentative feudal rump) appeared as 'old servants', much to the amusement of those whom they claimed to have served in the past. Despite a low poll (below 50 per cent), the PPP won a decisive majority, though innerparty squabbles denied them a more substantial victory. The local election results were thus a clear confirmation of the military junta's assessment of the political crisis. All the dissenters were silenced inside the armed forces; there were very few senior officers, in any of three services, prepared to tolerate the return of a PPP government. Zia had promised the general elections would follow in November 1979, but on 16 October-the army felt sufficiently confident to announce their indefinite postponement. For good measure it banned all political parties, forbade political activity of any kind, shut down most opposition newspapers and tightened censorship.

The banning of 'political activity' as such was necessitated by the spread of rural discontent in a number of areas. Exactly a week before Zia's announcement, a hurriedly prepared and little publicised peasant conference in the interior of Sind had been attended by several thousand peasant delegates. Sindhi peasant and national leaders—Rasul Baksh Palejo and Fazil Rahu being the best known among them—were arrested at the conclusion of the conference. Brought before a sum-

mary military court, they were sentenced to be publicly flogged and imprisoned. This was among the first instances of political activists being whipped in public. At a press conference in Islamabad, Zia explained the army's case: "Martial law is a temporary phenomenon, but it could go on for two years, or ten years. Ultimately a government has to come into existence that should enjoy the confidence of the people. I want to introduce Islam in Pakistan, in the true sense. Our present political edifice is based on the secular democratic system of the West which has no place in Islam...In Pakistan neither anarchy nor Westernism will work. This country was created in the name of Islam, and in Islam there is no provision for Western-type elections."

For over two years Zia consolidated his rule through a combination of repression, the shameless utilisation of Islam and an elaborate series of carefully orchestrated political initiatives designed to full the masses. On the two crucial issues--Bhutto and elections—he followed a similar pattern of procrastination. Bhutto's trial was permitted to last for nineteen months. This both created a feeling of hope that the deposed prime minister might win through in the end, and simultaneously encouraged a mood of fatalism and despair. so that the final verdict appeared almost as an anti-climax. The execution, of course, was not delayed, since that could have allowed a dangerous head of steam to build up. Throughout the period of the trial, Zia reassured politicians hostile to the PPP that once the Bhutto affair was over he would allow elections. Baluch and Pathan leaders were released from Hyderabad gaol, and the tribunal which had condemned them disbanded. This was the supreme irony and demonstrated Zia's audacity as a politician. Freeing the NAP leaders from detention had the effect of reassuring many people that an election could not be indefinitely delayed. This, in its turn, encouraged a certain passivity.

Zia's measures of 16 October 1979, while not exactly a bolt from the blue for some commentators, were none the less the equivalent of a second coup for most of Pakistan's politicians. Islam was the cloak with which the generals sought to cover their nakedness. A repressive code, partially modelled on medieval Islamic punishments, was introduced to punish social and political dissenters: public flogging, amputation of the hands of burglars and criminals; stoning to death of adulterers; execution of political activists; torture of women political prisoners. These were some of the measures put on the statute book by the military regime. This is what Zia was referring to when he later stated that 'for the past four years we have been trying to bring Islamic values to the

and the second of the second of the

country'. At the moment of writing, no one has actually been amputated or stoned to death, though many have been sentenced to receive these punishments. The whole plan is 'aimed at brutalising our political culture, at preparing people to accept repression and repressive measures' (Nubar Housepian, *Pakistan* in crisis: An interview with Eqbal Ahmed). The institutionalised brutality is designed to ensure a semipermanent passivity. Only partial success, however, has been achieved on this front, and the silent anger that undoubtedly exists in many parts of the country could soon erupt into a violent explosion on the streets.

The severity of Zia's rule reflected L the extreme character of the crisis afflicting the Pakistani state and army. The semi-patrician, Sandhursttrained style of the high command in the Fifties and early Sixties had gone together with a less aggressive, almost avuncular approach to Pakistani politics. Ayub had not allowed his own staunch anti-communism to mingle with that of the more plebian sections of urban society. Nor had he been besotted with religion: this had not been necessary at the time. But now times had changed. In the truncated, striferidden state of the Seventies, the army was larger, the social and class composition of its officer corps had altered, and the military campaigns in Bangladesh and Baluchistan had brought to the fore a new type of officer: a man trained and prepared to root out and kill all 'subversives'. Moreover, Zia now felt it necessary to utilise Islam to combat the PPP and groups further to the left.

This was done with the sometimes open, sometimes covert, support of the Jamaat-i-Islami (the Party of Islam). The Jamaat, an extreme right-wing organisation closely linked to Saudi Arabia and the United States, was the closest thing in Pakistan to a fascist party. Concentrated in the cities, it drew its support of the poor petty bourgeoisie. Unlike every other political formation in the country, including those on the left, the Jamaat was an extremely efficient grouping which took party organisation seriously. It had a structure built from the top down, consisting of a rigid hierarchy of command based on a cell-system. Recruitment was on a strict basis, and a great deal was demanded even of sympathisers. The leader-veteran theologian Abdul-Ala Maududi, who had presided over the organisation since before Partition-had virtually unfettered control. For the Jamaat, the country which served as a model was the backward looking, oil rich kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where the brand of Islam preached was an austere variety of Sunniism: the Saudis and their votaries in the Jammat rejected every other variant of

Islam as impure.

The Jammat had acquired a strong base among the immigrant-refugees from central India and East Punjab who had settled in Karachi, or replaced departing Sikhs and Hindus in the Western Punjab. This was hardly surprising, since those prepared to leave their ancestral homes and trek to a new country based on religion must have had stronger religious beliefs than those who chose to stay behind. One of those millions of Muslims who left India to become a citizen of the new state had been the twenty-three-year-old army lieutenant named Zia-ul Haq.During a visit to Teheran in September 1977 to explain his actions to the Shah—then still in power and the major US relay in the region—Zia gave an unusually

frank interview to the editor of the Teheran Daily Kayham. In response to question about Islam, he replied: "The basis of Pakistan is Islam and nothing else. I could have stayed on in India. But I did not, because I was a Muslim. We left everything we had in East Punjab and arrived in Pakistan destitute, but rich with hope and faith...seven generations of my family were born and brought up there. When the break-up came we were not rich; ours was an ordinary family. Nevertheless we sacrificed all we had and moved to Pakistan. With such a background how would you expect me to forget, after a mere thirty years, what the basis of the Islamic Republic was. The basis is Islam and shall be so."

When Zia became Chief Martial

Atala kan alan asatalah Damalain di Indi



Law Administrator in July 1977, his personal beliefs neatly coincided with the ideological needs of the debilitated state machine in Pakistan. Whether or not Zia was ever a card-carrying member of the Jamaati-Islami is not a matter of great interest. What is beyond doubt is his affinity to the political programme of that organisation. This fact has been commented upon by a number of American political scientists specialising in Pakistan. The one aspect of the Jamaat's influence which had rarely been discussed, however, is its leverage inside the Pakistan army. One reason for this absence in most scholarly accounts is lack of concrete information: the Jamaat's innerparty structure being based on a system of interlocking cells, the top leaders enjoy a monopoly of information regarding all functions of the organisation. None the less, on the basis of conversations with former and present junior army officers, it can be stated that the Jamaat's influence inside the army grew rapidly during the Bhutto years. Its literature and propaganda were widely circulated, and the more regrettable excesses of the Bhutto regime (perpetrated by such lieutenants as Mustafa Khar) were effectively utilised by the Jammat to widen its network inside the armed forces.

There was, however, a more fundamental shift assisting the Jamaat to extend its influence in the army. Changes in the Pakistan army over the last two decades have altered it in a number of significant ways. It

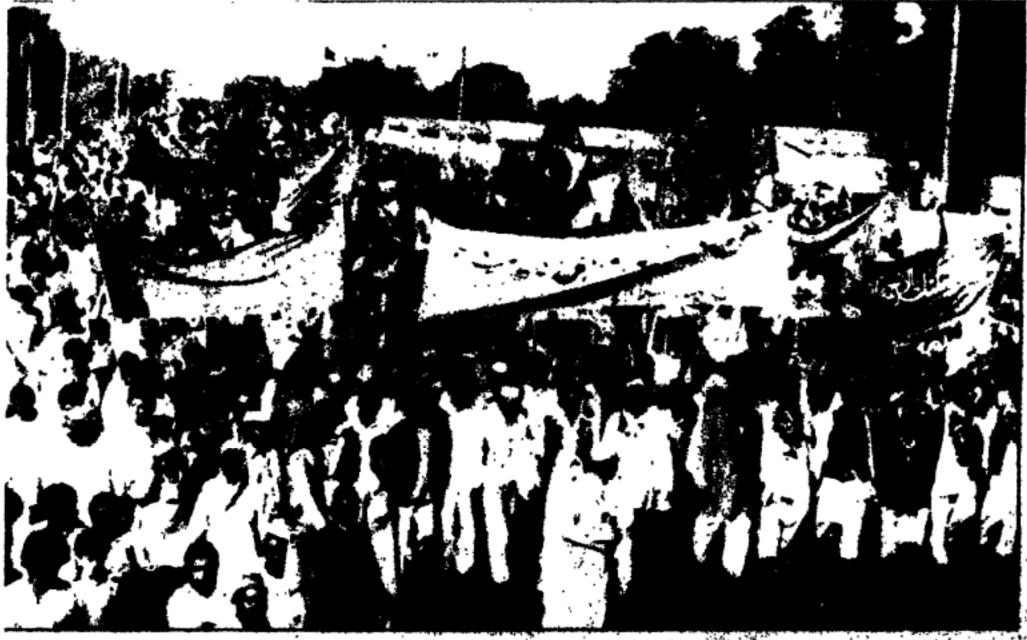
would be wrong to see this as a qualitative break, but the changes in the social composition of junior officers do merit some discussion. In the past, the overwhelming majority of officer-cadets were recruited from the rural gentry. More often than not they were second or third sons (the oldest male child being kept for better things). The majority of noncommissioned officers came from the upper and middle strata of the peasantry, while poor peasants comprised the rank and file. Thus the rigid class and caste divisions of the South Asian countryside were reproduced inside the British Indian army, and helped to preserve 'stability' at home and abroad. This tradition still continues to dominate the armies of India and Pakistan.

What has changed in this old equation? The most striking alteration since Partition is that there has been a sharp decline in recruitment of officers from the upper reaches of the rural gentry. The old families, whose rise to fame and fortune had been guaranteed by their loyalty to the British Raj, had felt that they had to repay imperialist generosity by providing a son to serve in army. But independence opened up other and more profitable channels: industry and commerce, politics and government service were to prove more attractive. The shift, of course, was gradual and its effects were not really felt in the army till the Seventies. Officers trained by the British, who had served the empire loyally during and after the Second World

War, were to provide the first generation of commanders after independence. But promotions were rapid for Muslim officers in the new army. The period of industrialisation in the late Fifties and Sixties saw a growth in the population of every city in West Pakistan: with no statistics available, it is difficult to provide even an approximate estimate of how many more cadets were now enrolled from the cities, but there can be no doubt that urban representation underwent a sharp proportional increase.

Most cadets accepted as potential officers at the Pakistan Military Academy at Kabul now came, in any event, from pettybourgeois layers in town and countryside. The era of the gentleman-cadet carefully nurtured and developed by the British had come to an end. The Jamaat-i-Islami, most influential amongst the city petty bourgeois, having encouraged its supporters to enlist in the army during the Sixties and Seventies, probably now has some dozens of officers at colonel or brigadier level, backed up by a bevy of more junior recruits. The Jamaat's penetration could have been counter-balanced if there had been a hard core determined to preserve the secular traditions of the army. But here Bhutto had made yet another mistake. Under pressure from the fundamentalists he had decreed that the Ahmediyyas (a heretical sect of Islam, to which many officers belong) were no longer Muslims. At a single stroke he had eliminated the

A procession supporting Islamic rule in Karachi



influence inside the army of one layer of middle and senior officers strongly opposed to the Jamaat's fanaticism. Actions such as this could only increase the weight of fundamentalist forces inside the

armed services.

Martial law was imposed in 1977 by generals fully aware of the political sympathies and orientation of their junior officers. Bhutto was still widely popular among the *jawans* (soldiers), but his standing in the officer corps was at its lowest ebb. Islam appeared to the intelligence agencies as the obvious solution. The fact that Zia appeared to believe in Islamic measures and presented himself as a devout Muslim was an additional bonus for those who cynically sought to exploit religion in order to establish their hold over the rural masses. The first two generations of senior officers had been heavily imbued with the old ideology. Even when they had intervened to take direct control of the state. they had done so with an oldfashioned conservatism, which had won them the plaudits of the Western press. The new breed, however, had no time for niceties. They acquiesced in Bhutto's takeover, since a direct military intervention could have led to civil war in West Pakistan itself. The campaign in Baluchistan then enabled the army to use the province as a laboratory for counterinsurgency operations. Bhutto had committed his fatal error: by bringing the army into politics, he had tightened the noose around his own neck. The roots of the martial law established in July 1977 stretched back to the Central government's coup against an elected provincial government.

One writes this not simply with hindsight: I made the same points much more emphatically in discussions with numerous PPP partisans at the time. Nor was this view confined to people like myself. Bhutto's political secretariat warned him repeatedly of the dangers inherent in the military intervention in Baluchistan. Rao Rashid, a senior adviser drafted a paper in which he spelt out how the junior officers

were reacting:

"Power has its own taste and in the course of time the army officers, especially in the middle ranks, start relishing power in the form of arrests, searches and interrogation which gives them the feel of authority. They also develop contempt for the ways of the politicians and the civil servants, and a general impression in the army circle starts gaining ground that everybody in the field of civil administration and politics is incompetent and corrupt... The army should be divested of powers of arrest, housesearches and keeping civilians in military custody even for a short period. The withdrawal of the army, which may be gradual, might

The Tart of the State of the St



Jinnah's tomb in Karachi

lead to more incidents but that risk should be taken... The impression amongst the junior army officers that the army is a panacea for all ills, which had received a severe blow after the debacle in East Pakistan, is again gaining ground. It can be very infectious and cannot remain confined to one province. This infection may not be allowed to spread."

The Rashid Memorandum would appear to confirm the harsh verdict of the Baluch leaders. They have always been sceptical of the reputed rift between Bhutto and the army during the civil war in Baluchistan. Mengal, for example, while accepting that the army jealously preserved its autonomy of action, insists: "Bhutto cannot be absolved. He was an autocrat and kept himself informed of everything that was going on. It was Bhutto who gave the army a blank cheque. They then carried on as they chose. It is true that Bhutto was not consulted on everything, but he gave them the authority.

The changes in the social and political composition of the officer corps, coupled with experiences in Baluchistan, produced sinister results. Pakistan's third period of military rule was designed to brutalise the population into passivity. Bhutto's execution, public floggings, routine torture of political prisoners (including women), harassment and intimidation of opposition politicians—all were designed to frighten the people and atomize any potential. dissent. There can be few doubts as to the initial success of the regime. Zia-ul Haq has succeeded in holding office for over five years, with the support of the army and a handful of chosen civil servants.

The power of the civil service has diminished considerably under Zia's dictatorship. During the Ayub period (1958-68), civil sarvants had co-ruled the country with the army: the last six years of Ayub's regime, indeed,

and the control of the control of the control of the had seen the civil service in effective command of the country. The civil service of Pakistan, like its military counterpart, had represented a Muslim breakaway from the Indian civil service. This institution had been the pride of the Raj and had governed. the country unfettered by democracy or politicians. It had, in reality, been the ruling party of British imperialism in India. The civil servants of the early twentieth century were even referred to as 'politicals' in the lexicon of the empire. Lord Curzon, in particular, had sung their praises in semi-lyrical prose: "There is no more varied or responsible service in the world. At one moment the political (civil servant) may be grinding in the Foreign Office, at another he may be required to stiffen the administration of a backward native state, at a third he may be presiding over a jirga of unruly tribesmen on the Frontier, at a fourth he may be demarcating a boundary amid the wilds of Tibet or the sands of Seistan. I hope that the time may never come when the political department will cease to draw to itself the best abilities and the finest characters that the services in India can produce.'

With only a few changes Curzon's description retains its validity in the states of contemporary South Asia, especially India and Sri Lanka. In both Pakistan and Bangladesh, however, the civil service has shared power with the army, which in Pakistan today is the dominant political force: it is an army-party, running the country on behalf of a state that has run out of steam. The authority of the civil service has declined, even top bureaucrats now being dependent on military patrons. Military rule or Bonapartism has become the religion of the Pakistani ruling classes. But the latter now confront a fearsome dilemma: if they keep the army in command indefinitely, the state will begin to break up sooner rather than later; if they send the army back to barracks, they have to find a credible alternative, which at the moment does not exist. It is this insoluble predicament, above all, which has helped General Zia-ul Haq

to stay in power.

A second factor, however, has been the changed situation on Pakistan's borders. Just when Zia's position was becoming shaky and unrest was spreading in the upper reaches of the army, the Soviet entry into Afghanistan provided the Pakistani dictator with a new lease of life. This could be seen most clearly in the sudden change of attitude displayed by the Western press. The sordid hangman of an elected prime minister was soon transformed into the plucky defender of the frontiers of the Free World. Prior to the Russian invasion, most Western observers had been in favour of a return to civilian rule, but this theme virtually disappeared in the years that fol-

lowed. For example, on 28 September 1979, three months before Soviet tanks rumbled into Kabul, the Financial Times commented editorially: "General Zia has been no more successful than the three (sic) military regimes before him in finding a satisfactory balance between the demands of the provinces for more autonomy and the claims of the central government for sufficient power to hold the country together ... His regime has brought the army-which has traditionally believed that it has a special role as defender of the nation's integrity—into disrepute by the oppressiveness of its rule."

A few years later the same newspaper (and the same leader-writer?) was stating that: "President Zia's rule has been firm, somewhat harsh. But he is not a dictator. What he lacks in depth he makes up for in guile." A report by Amnesty International on Pakistan in 1982 was to provide a sober and chilling corrective to the Foreign Office propaganda regularly reproduced by Fleet

Street leader writers.

Army rule has brought all the contradictions of the Pakistani state to a head. Lack of political democracy, economic inequality and the oppression of minority nationalities have become deeply embedded in the consciousness of a mass which increasingly begins to question the very basis of the state. It does not, after all, require a university degree to realise that something has gone seriously wrong with the state of Pakistan. Apportioning blame among individual politicians or military leaders is clearly insufficient. Stressing the fact that Jinnah died prematurely, or that he left behind only a bunch of mediocrities, is to be crassly superficial. All that is true, but evades the real issue, the more fundamental problem which needs to be grasped, analysed, understood and acted upon. To state it bluntly has always been unpopular in Pakistan, but to remain silent today is a crime: the truth is that there was no real basis for carving out an independent 'Muslim' state from the Indian subcontinent. For the overwhelming majority of Muslim toilers, it could have no economic or political justification. A confused demagogy and sinister emotionalism became substitutes for a sober, realistic appraisal of the condition and objective interests of Muslims in India.

True, imperialism was a messy and unpleasant business. The break-up of the old colonial empires witnessed a hasty evacuation of South Asia and much of Africa by the European powers. They left behind a wide variety of bastard bourgeois states: modernised mutants of pre-capitalist social formations. Victims of the law of combined and uneven development, these states were trapped in a circle of poverty and dependence. The only way out of this prison was through social revolution—as



PPP supporters on the rampage after Bhutto was hanged

attested by China, Indo-China, Cuba and Nicaragua. Otherwise, the picture is grim. Of the dependent postcolonial states, the only ones which have succeeded in separating the political from the economic sphere

are India and Mexico.

In Pakistan, the state has overpowered civil society and with a vengeance. Pakistan was an irrationality, a product of imperialist penetration of the subcontinent. Its makeshift political and social composition indicated that its interior was diseased from birth. The disintegration of 1971-2 was not the result of a foreign conspiracy or an Indian plot. It was the dispassionate verdict of history on an experiment doomed to failure. The process is by no means over, as the imposition of martial law in July 1977 vividly demonstrated. What sort of a state is it that can exist only by an indiscriminate use of the mullah, the gun and the latest torture equipment imported from the West? Whatever its other demerits, we can say that such a state is built on foundations of sand. It cannot last indefinitely. When military rule becomes the first rather than the last response of a frightened ruling class; when elections can no longer be tolerated, because the masses might utilise them to impose their will; when the army and civil bureaucracy lose all credibility or trust and are regarded as usurpers-then we may indeed say that the end cannot be far away. The future trajectory of the Pakistani state, however, does not depend exclusively on the correlation of social, class and national forces in the country itself. Pakistan's future is inextricably linked to the turn of events in Kabul, the tense confrontations in Teheran and the strategic options chosen by the Indian ruling class in New Delhi.

he peculiar history/of Pakistan's establishment lent the state certain quite spécific features, of which the most pronounced was the attempt to construct a strong centre and ignore the democratic rights of the vast majority of the population. Inevitably, this came into conflict with the multinational character of the Pakistani state. Denial of the democratic rights and linguistic and cultural freedoms of the bulk of the population gave birth to a powerful national movement in East Bengal, which culminated in a civil war and the establishment of Bangladesh. The military-bureaucratic elite responsible for this debacle learnt the wrong lessons from the break-up of the old state, and sought to make religion the organising principle of the new one. This enterprise, which reached its peak with the military coup of July 1977, has failed to solve the intractable structural problem confronting Pakistan. The only viable solution (even within the existing socio-economic framework) would have entailed a loose federation of the four provinces, with a centre responsible only for defence, foreign affairs, currency and communications. Such a solution, however, would undoubtedly have weakened the hold of the army and bureaucracy, and opened up the possibility that some of the provinces might experiment with radical socioeconomic programmes for change. A voluntary federation, or ultimate disintegration? This was the real question confronting the state. Rejecting the first option, it sought to avoid the second by institutionalising a form of political rule based exclusively on coercion. In denying themselves any popular legitimacy, however, the military rulers were weakening the legitimacy of the Pakistani state itself.

The 'nationalities question' has become a central point of dispute in Pakistan. The debate on nationalism, nationalities and the right of nations to self-determination has a distinguished pedigree in Marxism and liberal-democratic political theory alike. For Marx and Engels the old nation-states of Europe were a product of the development of capital-

The uneven global spread of capitalism; the capricious asymmetry imposed on three continents by decades of imperialist domination; the unfinished character of the socialist revolutions that transformed Russia, China and Indo-China; the revealing failure of advanced capitalism in the West to satisfy all the democratic aspirations of its subjects—all these factors have prevented a dissolution of the national question. In other words it is politics, much more than economics, which lies at the root of the problem.

If we now contrast the colonial state created by the British in India, we perceive a much closer similarity

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to western Europe than to Tsarist Russia on the crucial issue of nationalities. Political power was held by a foreign ruling class, which based itself locally on a small number of civil servants and soldiers in alliance with native rulers and elite social layers. But the colonial structures could, at best, create a deformed and misshapen bourgeois state. This was by design, not accident. The colonial authorities only permitted such political, cultural and economic development as was absolutely necessary to preserve the empire. If they had allowed an untrammelled social and economic advance, the entire pattern of postindependence South Asia might have been different. Even the limited reforms from above had *begun* a process of merging nationalities, while simultaneously encouraging the emergence of an all-India national movement against colonial oppression. Like the post-1848 bourgeoisie in Europe, the colonial state halted reforms from above to prevent a revolt from below.

In post-independence Pakistan, the 'national' contradiction became dominant largely because the rulingclass apparatuses excluded the majority of the population from representation. This was coupled with the national oppression of Bengalis, and attempts to suppress their democratic rights and their language. In contemporary Pakistan, the four major nationalities are the Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans and Baluch. Of these the Punjabis are the largest, comprising over 60 per cent of Pakistan's population, followed by the Sindhis, Pathans and Baluch respectively. The Punjab, known in the colonial period as both the granary and the 'swordarm' of India, has succeeded in retaining these characteristics but within the framework of a much smaller state. It also benefited most during the period of industrialisation initiated by the military regime of General Ayub Khan. Today the Punjab is militarily, economically and politically the dominant province in Pakistan. At the other extreme, Baluchistan contains only four per cent of Pakistan's population, though it forms 42 per cent of its territory. Successive governments have left the province almost entirely undeveloped. Per capita income, the level of adult literacy and life expectancy are lower than anywhere else in the country. The struggle between Baluch nationalists and a Punjabidominated military-bureaucratic elite has symbolised the difficulties that confront Islamabad. At the same time, since Bhutto's execution the national movement in Sind has acquired a new dynamism and been subjected to direct military repression in the interior, while the Pathans of the NWFP are also showing signs of disaffection with the regime. The competing hierarchy of

intelligence agencies which are the real political advisers to the military chiefs, not surprisingly, are obsessed with the nationalist dimension of Pakistani politics.

Successive regimes have not discouraged the movement of labour, so that Pathans and Baluch are a strong component of the urban proletariat in Karachi, while Punjabi policemen and government officials are a common sight in Quetta. Nevertheless, there has been neither an even process of industrialisation nor a modernised political order. As a result, all the minority nationalities jealously safeguard their identity. A new layer of Pushtu, Sindhi and Baluch poets has arisen to proclaim the vitality of their respective languages and cultures, and to complain against oppression: nothing concentrates the mind so wonderfully as a military government. Nor are Punjabi workers or peasants contented with their lot: there is in fact growing discontent among them. In a recent interview, the Baluch leader still resident in Pakistan, Ghaus Bux Bizenjo, made a strong plea for a democratic federal state, arguing that "the bitterness and tension that has built up over the years is not only adversely affecting the people's relations with the government, but has also become a source and cause of doubts. There are today misgivings about the efficacy, viability (and justification) of the state itself and about whether the people can any longer live together."

al to tolerate representative governments in the provinces has exacerbated the problem tenfold. Islam did not prove strong enough to hold East and West Pakistan together. Why should it then become the cement to unite the remaining four provinces? If 20,000 Baluch guerrillas could tie down four Pakistani divisions (100,000 men) and numerous air force squadrons, with Iranian helicopters and pilots, inflicting heavy casualties before retreating, how could conflicts on three fronts be

The point we are stressing is a

simple one. The main reason for the

smouldering national discontent in

Pakistan's three minority provinces

is political discrimination. The refus-

could conflicts on three fronts be contained? It is true that there are hardly any Baluch in the armed forces and very few Sindhis; but there is a substantial minority of Pathans, so that trouble in the NWFP could create serious dissensions within the army. (The lack of Baluch recruits in the army is, of course, blatant political discrimination. Certainly, the macho rhetoric behind the racist theory of 'martial races' so popular with the Pakistani high command could hardly exclude the

Baluch. According to the classic ex-

position given by General Sir O'Moore Creagh, C. in C. of the Brit-

ish Indian Army in 1909-14: "In the

hot, flat regions, of which by far the greater part of India consists...are

found races, timid both by religion and habit, servile to their superiors, but tyrannical to their inferiors, and quite unwarlike. In other parts....where the winter is cold, the warlike minority is to be found." But leaving aside the fact that this gibberish has been repeatedly refuted by history—in Vietnam, China, Bangladesh, etc.—such arguments cannot affect the Baluchis, who fulfil all the 'martial' criteria laid down by the military ideologies of the Raj and their native successors.)

Three of Pakistan's provinces—the Punjab, NWFP and Baluchistanwere bisected by Lord Curzon's civil servants and their successors. One half of the Punjab is in India, part of Baluchistan is in Iran and the Durand Line demarcating the Pakistan-Afghanistan border was drawn with total disregard for the integrity of peoples or nationalities. So can the national question be solved within the existing framework of the Pakistani state? Only if there is a fundamental change in the character of the state and its machinery. This is impossible without a social revolution. It is one of history's ironies that 'Muslim' Pakistan could only survive as a stable entity if it were a seculardemocratic, socialist republic, with safeguards for all nationalities and religions. It is true that such a future appears utopian at the moment; but there is no other long-term solution.

In that sense, the problems of democracy, federalism and the national question are not the sole responsibility of General Zia-ul Haq: his departure, however it comes about, will not lead to their automatic solution. The crisis of nationalities is far too advanced to be cured by a mild dose of reforms from above, coupled with a limited industrialisation programme. The torture, floggings and executions imposed by the military regime on the people of Sind and Baluchistan have hardened attitudes considerably. An Indian journalist travelling through Pakistan in January 1982 reported that: "A Sindhi militant asked me in all seriousness why the Indian army withdrew in 1971, why it did not move in deeper into his part of the country at a time when the Pak army was in shambles." Such a question reflects both demoralisation and despair, but it also signifies a growing anger and alienation from Islamabad and everything that it represents. The national question is the timebomb threatening the very struc-tures of the post-1971 state. The hour of the explosion cannot be too far

This is an extract from the book Can Pakistan survive? by Tariq Ali, published by Penguin Books (price Rs 46.61)

Sharad Pawar: The next NTR?

At 42, Sharad Pawar, the president of the Congress(S), is the youngest president of any of the national parties in the country. SHUBHABRATA BHATTACHARYA spoke to him in Cochin, where the AICC(S) session was held recently.

embark on the unity move with the DSP and the Rashtriya Congress? A: This process and the discussion have been going on in our party since a long time. The Bombay resolution of the AICC(S) (passed in October 1981) had categorically mentioned that we should try to go nearer to the likeminded parties and the parties were also practically defined. The Bombay resolution also said that our ultimate aim should be to provide a viable alternative to the ruling party. This has been the think-

ing for the past two years and even

today, most of our friends from

northern India and central India are

of the opinion that we should try to bring likeminded forces around us and that we should try to avoid the splitting of votes among each other. In fact, Mr Ratubhai Adani, president of the Rashtriya Congress of Gujarat, took the initiative. He met us and then we talked to Mr Bahuguna; both Mr Bahuguna and Mr Ratubhai Adani are products of the Congress movement, they have been in the Congress for more years than even me, so there should be no difficulty in our coming together. Basically, ideologically and programmewise, there is no difference between us.

Q: Mr Chandra Shekhar,

Sharad Pawar: a serious threat to Congress(I)?

Why did you suddenly



Chaudhury Charan Singh and Babu Jagjivan Ram are also products of the Congress movement. Are you going to include them in this unity move? Or is it not possible?

A: What you say is correct. Mr Chandra Shekhar, Chaudhury Sahab and Babu Jaguvan Ram are all products of the Congress movement, that is why in our political resolution we have emphasised the need for bringing together all these leaders and their respective parties. I will be happy if these forces can combine.

Q: Is it practically possible to bring Mr Chandra Shekhar and Mr Bahu-

guna together?

A: I don't know; I cannot say now. But in 1977, everbody was together.

Q: In your presidential address to the AICC(S), you said that you would prefer the united front concept to the "electoral shortcut of merger"...

A: There are two things: first we should try to bring the likeminded forces and parties under one banner. That is our first priority. If this is not possible, I will prefer a front. If we succeed in bringing likeminded forces together, there are some forces or parties which may not be likeminded, but in the interest of providing a viable national alternative, probably we may have to make some adjustments with them. For example, we may have to make adjustments with the leftist parties, the CPI(M) and the CPI. United front politics is equally important, provided that the front clarifies and finalises a definite programme and places it before the people.

Q: Are you going to respond to the BJP's call for setting up a national

democratic front?

A: We have not reached any conclusion regarding the BJP yet. I have not discussed this seriously yet.

Q: Would you be totally averse to the BJP or would you like to include

it in your front?

A: As per the decision which was taken at the Bombay AICC meeting and in this meeting as well, for the purpose of electoral adjustments, there is no harm in associating with any party, including the BJP.

ns and in course of time, they will

There are a lot of people in the Congress(I) who do not approve of what is happening in the party...(They) are maintaining a rapport with us.

Q: Will the Congress (Socialist) maintain its separate identity for the

time being?

A: We are maintaining our separate indentity and we would like to maintain our separate identity. But for the larger national interests, if some likeminded parties decide to come under one banner, the Congress(S) will not come in their way. The Congress(S) would support it.

Q: Do you think that Congress(S) by itself is a force anywhere outside

Maharashtra?

A: It is a force in Kerala. Everybody asks me this question. But one should not forget that today in this country practically all recognised political parties have bases in certain states only. For instance, take the Lok Dal. It is a recognised national political party, but everybody is aware that its strength is restricted to some states, like UP, Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar, etcetera. The CPI(M) has its strength in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura mainly, but can it be ignored in national politics? Similar is the case with the Janata Party. It is there in Gujarat, in Karnataka, a little bit in UP, and here and there. Now it has some base in Orissa due to Mr Biju Patnaik and in Bihar due to Mr Karpoori Thakur's decision. But still the Janata is a recognised national party. Take the Bharatiya Janata Party. It is strong in Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh and it has considerable strength in these places. Same is the case with my party as well. We have a good unit in Assam, though we lost the elections, due to the reasons which have now become wellknown. In Maharashtra and Kerala and in few other states we have strong units. So, the position of every political party being such, the reality must be accepted.

Q: In Kerala, 15 months ago, when Mr A.K. Anthony and Mr Vyalar Ravi left, you were at least left with some leaders who have managed to put up a good show during the rally on 8 May. What is your future in

West Bengal?

A: In West Bengal, it will take some time, but we are getting a good response. The reason why we are getting a good response in Kerala today is that there is a team of young and honest workers in this state. I am expecting to get a similar team in West Bengal as well. It would take time. There may not be names which are known statewide in West Bengal, but there are some people who are serious and have political convic-

tions and in course of time, they will prove their worth.

Q: When Mr Anthony took his decision, you promptly expelled him from the party. But in the case of Mr P.R. Dasmunsi, there was a different line of thinking. How do you explain the consideration shown to Mr Dasmunsi? It was almost known that he was quitting your party, but you waited till he actually resigned.

A: The difference was that in Kerala our party got elected in the name of the left democratic front. Our party shared power in the CPI(M) led government. Then our party unit led by Mr Anthony took a decision to withdraw from the government. We supported that decision. Thereafter our party unit took the decision to withdraw its support to the left democratic front government. We tolerated even that. In the Bombay AICC, where Mr Anthony, Mr Vyalar Ravi and other friends were present, there was a commitment from the Kerala friends that while they would withdraw their support to the left democratic front, they will not join any front with the Congress(I). After they withdrew from here, they not only supported but joined hands with the Congress(I). They fought



I am told that Rajiv Gandhi was a good pilet. And a good pilet shabit is to always depend on the control tower. Whenever the control tower tells him to land, he lands; if it tells him to go in a particular direction, he obeys...I do not know whether he continues with that habit of receiving orders from the control tower or not.

Maneka Gandhi might be getting a bit of publicity and some gatherings here or there, but I do not think that she has any significance in politics.

the elections with Congress(I), and then joined the government of the Congress(I). Mr Dasmunsi was definitely talking about going to the Congress(I) and he was arguing with us also and we told him that we did not approve of his thinking. But he was open for discussions. In the case of Mr Anthony and Mr Vyalar Ravi, they straightaway took their decision, and when they took the decision, it was a different situation altogether.

Q: You have been concentrating a lot on Maharashtra. And there is no doubt that you have a good base in that state. Considering that now the accent is on regional parties and regional leaders, are you thinking of forming a regional party in Maharashtra?

A: I would like to work under the banner of the Indian National Congress(S). It is true that I am devoting more time to Maharashtra as compared to other states. The situation which I am facing in Maharashtra is such that I have no choice but to spend a lot of time there, because most of my valued colleagues have left me, deserted me; they have joined the Congress(I). I have to rebuild everything. This should not be misunderstood to mean that ultimately our thinking is to form a regional party—absolutely no. Definitely we are projecting some important regional issues, but we don't want to keep Maharashtra away from the national mainstream.

Q: Your relationship with Mr Chandra Shekhar on the personal level is said to be very good. But in your dealings with the Janata Party as such are there some constraints, especially because of the attitude of the Maharashtra Janata leaders to-

wards you?

A: (Laughs) Basically that is not the issue. The issue is that my equation and relationship with Mr Chandra Shekhar is wellknown. And that will be a permanent feature also. But there are some suggestions that we should come together. One thing is absolutely clear in my mind, and not only in my mind but in the minds of most of my colleagues in the Congress(S), that while the suggestion that we should come together is good, there should be clarity regarding the motive: what is the reason behind this unity? What is our direction? What will be the programme? Suppose you win power, then for whom will you run the government? Unless you are clear on all these points, I don't think that this unity



and lose vital body salts The symptoms? A dry throat,

thirst,'heavy' legs, general fatigue.

You're probably so used to these symptoms that you accept them as part of the exercise They're not And in extreme cases, the

symptoms can be more severe cramps, nausea, even unconsciousness

How vital are vital body salts?

These salts are made up of sodium, potassium, chloride, citrate and magnesium And each of them plays a vital, role in your body chemistry They keep your reflexes sharp,

your musdes in tone, maintain your fluid balance, and convert carbohydrates into energy.

Water alone doesn't help

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will be useful. That is why I am very particular about all these things. I always raise these types of issues. There are some honest differences of opinion between some of the Janata Party leaders' thinking and our party leaders' thinking or our party's approach and that is why unless we resolve all these issues, one should not jump to conclusions.

Q: Have you had a dialogue with Mr Chandra Shekhar recently?

A: Yes, a number of times. Recently we have not had a detailed dialogue, but I am thinking of going to meet him soon after this AICC session is over. I am going to discuss with him the possibilities...

Q: The possibilities of united action, or of unity as such?

A: Of both.

Q: Have you had a dialogue with

Chaudhury Charan Singh?

A: I had one meeting with him. I must say that his approach was quite positive. He had shown a lot of interest (in unity). He invited us a second time also, but I could not go; that was a mistake from my side. After this session certainly we shall again sit together. I will fix the next meeting, I will go and discuss with him.

Q: In your bid for opposition unity, which are the other forces you are

approaching?

A: Of course, we are talking to the DSP and to the Rashtriya Congress of Mr Ratubhai Adani. We have reached some conclusions also. We have adopted a joint statement, which has appeared in the press. And ultimately, we would like to work together. Apart from these two parties, we have in mind Chaudhury Sahab and Chandra Shekhar.

Q: What is your opinion about the functioning of the government in

Maharashtra today?

A: Everybody was expecting a lot of things from Mr Vasantdada Patil because the whole country was aware of Antulay's administration, his misuse of power. Similarly with Babasaheb Bhosale everybody was disturbed or unhappy because of his non-functioning. So, the people had placed a lot of hope on Dada. But Dada has now been there for three months and the people are realising that there is no change from the past. The government is not moving at all, even regarding drought, though the chief minister is making statements every day, and announcing over the media, the radio, television, that he had done so much-but that is all false. If you visit the villages, you will see how the villagers are facing problems.

Q: You have talked about the possibility of a snap mid-term poll in your speech at the AICC(S) session. In the event that it does take place, it will be for the first time that you will be campaigning in Maharashtra on your own and without Mr Y. B. Chavan. What is your opinion about Mr Chavan? Why did the two of you

fall out?

A: Even today my equation with Mr Chavan is personally very good. He is the leader who has definitely, after Lokmanya Tilak, brought Maharashtra on the national and international map. He is the leader who fought in the independence movement, who administered the state efficiently, first in the capacity of a minister and then as the chief minister. He is the leader who became India's defence minister in the most crucial time (after the 1962 Chinese aggression). He has been the union home, finance and foreign minister at crucial times. Everywhere he administered very efficiently. Though he was in power for years together, he has definitely maintained his character. And that is why we respect him both as a person and as a leader. Definitely we do not approve of his decision to leave our party and join the Indira Congress. He himself was pleading with us and arguing with us and telling us in 1977, 1978 and 1979 that we should not associate with the Congress(I) and he had convincing reasons. Due to him we took the decision not to associate ourselves with Mrs Gandhi. Mrs Gandhi has not changed, there is no change in her attitude, or her policies, but Mr Chavan has taken a



My equation with Y. B. Chavan is personally very good...but Mr Chavan has taken a decision (associating himself with the Congress-I) of which I don't approve. That is why politically we are on different sides.

decision which I don't approve. That is why politically we don't agree, we are on different sides.

Q: Considering the fact that you are just 42 years old, you will perhaps be a serious challenger to Mr Rajiv Gandhi in the years to come. What is your opinion about him?

A: (Laughs) I don't know whether he is my challenger or I am his challenger. I have never met that man. That is why I cannot assess that man properly. I can therefore assess him from what I have learnt from the media only. The way Mrs Gandhi is giving him publicity and the way the central and state governments of the Congress(I) are using their machinery for his image building, is astonishing. The radio, the television, the government media, are repeatedly drilling in the message that "he is the man." But whether he is the man or not can be seen only when he actually faces a crisis. Then only will we be able to judge him, whether he can overcome that crisis or not. But I am told that he was a good pilot. And a pilot's habit is to always depend on the control tower. Whenever the control tower tells him to land, he lands; if it tells him to go in a particular direction, then he obeys. When it tells him to take off, he takes off. I do not know whether he continues with that habit of receiving orders from the control tower. We have to see whether he can take off without the control tower or not.

Q: And what is your opinion about the person whom Mr Rajiv Gandhi considers to be his arch rival in politics, the estranged daughter-inlaw of the Prime Minister, Mrs Man-

eka Gandhi?

A: I don't take it seriously. It is a family quarrel. She might be getting a little bit of publicity and some gatherings here or there, but I don't think she has any significance in politics.

Q: In your political resolution passed at the AICC(S), you have referred to the democratic forces within the Congress(I), to whom you have sent an invitation to join hands with you. Who are these elements?

A: I don't want to disclose their names. Firstly, there are a lot of people who do not approve of what is happening in the Congress(I). Secondly, they are honest Congressmen, so they would like to associate themselves with a party which has a Congress character. There are a number of such people who are maintaining a rapport with us. One of the reasons why we made this appeal is that they are just talking to us, they are keeping a rapport with us, whenever we meet them they tell us that they do not approve of what is happening in the country, but they are not taking any concrete decision. This appeal is addressed to them so that they take a concrete decision and do not continue to waste their time and remain mere spectators.

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Who will win the panchayat elections?

n the eve of the elections to the 56,000 panchayats in West Bengal, the state's ruling Left Front is facing a major crisis. In about 35 per cent of the panchayats, the Left Front partners are contesting against each other. In the elections that will be held on 31 May, the CPI(M) has fielded 52,000 candidates, while the Forward Bloc, the RSP and the CPI have together fielded about 26,000 candidates. Even the Forward Bloc (Marxist), a relatively small partner of the Front, has put up its own candidates against the CPI(M)'s.

This is not the first time that the CPI(M) will face such a situation. Even during the last panchavat elections held in the state in 1978, the Front partners stood against each other in about 8,000 constituencies. Most of the results, however, were in favour of the CPI(M): the party won about 34,000 seats from about the 52,000 seats that it contested. The Forward Bloc won 1,900 seats of the 6,500 seats: the RSP, which did marginally better than the Forward Bloc, won about 2,000 seats of the 6,000 seats it contested. (The CPI, which was not a Left Front partner during the last elections put up 2,500 candidates and won only 825 seats.)

When talks on the adjustment of seats for the imminent panchayat elections between the Left Front partners failed this year, the CPI(M) made one point clear: the result of not having an adjustment with the CPI(M) would be disastrous for the other Front partners. For, the party said, the CPI(M) would win 60 per cent of the seats, the Congress(I) 35 per cent, and the rest would be divided between the other Left Front partners and the independents. If what the CPI(M) leaders say does happen, then the party's strength will improve while the smaller partners will face increasing problems in making themselves heard within the Front.

During the last panchayat elections, the Congress(I) did not contest officially. Instead, some Congressmen contested the elections as independent candidates. But despite that, the Congress(I)-supported independents as well as other independents managed to capture about 16,000 seats. This time, the Congress(I) is likely to win more seats as it is contesting the elections officially. Even though there is infighting among



By BARUN SENGUPTA

the Congressmen and much dispute over the allocation of seats to the candidates, Left Front leaders admit that the Congress(I) will put upa better show this time. Congress(I) supporters are of course, inclined to the same view. They say that the Marxists have become unpopular in a number of panchayats and infighting among the Front partners will definitely reduce the number of seats they will win this

It would be very difficult to predict the results of the panchayat elections, though everyone agrees that whatever the outcome, it would have a considerable effect on state politics. If the Congress(I) fares well, then it would adopt a more aggressive posture in the state. For instance, Congressmen, especially in the rural areas, would start asserting themselves again.

Election graffiti in Howrah



But if the CPI(M) increases its strength, it may adopt an offensive posture towards the Congress(I) and other partners of the Left Front. However, it is unlikely that the CPI(M) will in any way try to humiliate the Forward Bloc, RSP and the CPI immediately. But one thing is certain: in case the CPI, RSP and the Forward Bloc fare badly, then the bases these parties have in the rural areas will effectively cease to exist. These parties are also aware of this reality and are therefore trying their best to mobilise all their resources to defeat the CPI(M) and the Congress(I).

On account of the panchayat elections, relations between the supporters of the CPI(M) and those of the other Front partners have become bitter, especially in districts like Cooch Behar, Midnapore, Murshidabad, Jalpaiguri, Birbhum and North 24-Parganas. Mr Jyoti Basu has, of course, appealed to all the leaders of the Left Front to take measures to ensure that the tension does not escalate. But it is common knowledge that the cadres of the Left Front parties will not be willing to listen to even their leaders. For, the CPI(M) is fighting to retain its supremacy in the Front while the smaller partners are striving to weaken the position of the CPI(M) in order to retain their own independence.

The panchayat elections are not being fought on any political issue. The determining factors are going to be the performance and the image of the parties in the rural areas. The CPI(M), for instance, controlled more than 60 per cent of the panchayats, a number of which are now known to be hotbeds of corruption and nepotism. It is true, of course, that even when the Congress used to control most of the panchayats, they were not free from corruption. But the difference is that the panchayats now have more power and finances that they did before. In addition, than panchayats also have a say in the distribution of land and in advancing loans.

It is true that the CPI(M) has been able to consolidate its position in the rural areas with the help of the panchayats: during the last six years more than Rs 400 crores were pumped into the rural areas through the panchayats. And the CPI(M) expects that those who benefited from this will support the party in the forthcoming elections.

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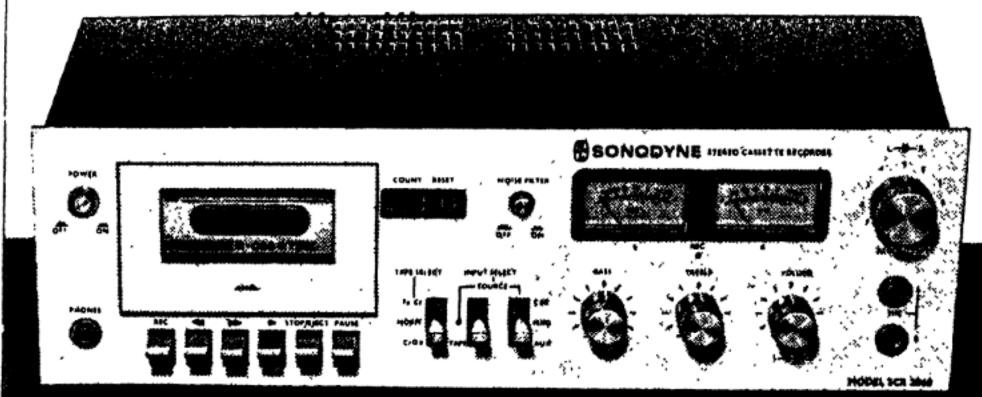
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It is time to modernise Indian capitalism

he recent no-holds-barred infighting between two brands of capitalists-deshi and the not exactly videshi but those known as non-resident Indians-has brought out an inherent weakness of Indian capitalism. This is feudalism in capitalism, that is, continuing dynastic succession in the most modern Indian companies. In fact, to call the companies public limited companies, is a misnomer. For all practical purposes they are private limited companies. The son succeeds the father, as in most other walks of life in the country. In the terminology of sociologists, this is a feudal principle.

Capitalism is born in the womb of feudalism. But it does not mature unless it snaps its umbilical cord with feudalism so that as it develops, the traces of feudalism in capitalism fade out. In advanced capitalist countries, family. controlled corporations are now an exception to the rule. As a general rule, ownership has been delinked from the management of big corporations. In some countries, this has been achieved through an evolutionary process. But in others it has been achieved through a revolutionary process. In Japan, for instance, Gen. McArthur, with one stroke of the pen ended the family control, known as zaibatus, over big companies. The professionalisation of corporations made them more efficient and this, in fact, invigorated capitalism. In Japan the end of zaibatus was the beginning of the lapanese miracle.

Indian capitalism is very slow to change. But the family control system is bound to disintegrate. In India, the most glorious of the feudal dynasties, the Mughal dynasty, became weak as a result of internecine fighting and its final burial took place at the hands of foreign invaders. Now, joint families too are breaking up, creating a lot of unpleasantness among the family members. The Indian big business families are not free from this rule. The companies caught in this in fighting have generally stagnated. It is not clear that if modern-day capitalists adopt family planning and produce only one son, how far they will be able to defy the law of

The growth itself is weakening the system of family control. In the companies which have grown the fastest, the shareholdings of the



KEWAL VARMA

family automatically get diluted. The families which have been most zealous in keeping their shareholdings to "safe" limits have ended up ensuring the slow growth of their companies. It is possible that many capitalists may respond to the danger of takeovers by non-residents by staggering the growth of the companies so that their shareholdings are not diluted. In other words, the cost of clinging to the outmoded family-control system would be slower economic growth.

In order to prevent that eventuality and make Indian companies more vigorous, Indian capitalism needs a swift operation to snap its umbilical cord. Fortunately, over a period of time, government-owned public financial institutions have acquired sizable shareholdings in most of the Indian companies. For instance, these holdings are of the order of 45 per cent in TELCO, 42 per cent in TISCO, 46 per cent in Voltas, 54 per cent in Escorts, 40 per cent in Modi Rubber, 44 per cent in Mahindra and Mahindra, 31 per cent in Kirloskar Oil Engines, 36 per cent in National Rayon and 38 per cent in ACC. On the other

A jolt to Indian capitalism to make it modern is overdue. But Mrs Gandhi is hardly the person to bring about such a revolution in Indian capitalism. The one whose one-point programme is to perpetuate dynastic succession in politics to help her son, will neither have the will nor the moral authority to end the system

hand, the shareholdings of the families controlling these companies hardly exceed 10 per cent or so. Then why should it be Swraj Paul versus Bharat Ram or Swraj Paul versus Nanda, or versus Tata? What about the financial institutions? They have the highest stakes

in these companies.

The holdings of these institutions could be used effectively to bring about the professional revolution in Indian capitalism. The institutions' position can be further strengthened by reactivating the old rule of conversion of loan into equity. The companies which stagger their expansion in a desperate effort to ensure the continuance of family control, could be nationalised. Simultaneously, trusts should be made to disinvest their shareholdings. (Trusts are the cover to perpetuate family control.) To minimise political interference, the financial institutions can adopt the system of the foreign companies. Management consultants can be asked to short-list from among the existing employees, a panel for the post of chairman/managing director of a company. The institutions can make the final selection from this panel and adopt a person as their candidate for the post. With their holdings, they can certainly carry the day in the annual general meeting of the company in the event of a contest.

The question is: Why should Ratan Tata succeed J.R.D. Tata, or Vinay Bharat Ram succeed Bharat Ram or Rajan Nanda succeed H.P. Nanda, if more competent professionals are available in the companies? In fact, if, for instance, it is found that Vinay Bharat Ram and Rajan Nanda are really competent, then let them swap places-Rajan Nanda goes to DCM and Vinav Bharat Ram goes to Escorts. This will ensure the final end of family

control over companies.

A jolt to Indian capitalism to make it modern is overdue. But Mrs Indira Gandhi is hardly the person to bring about such a revolution in Indian capitalism. The one whose one-point programme is to perpetuate dynastic succession in politics to help her son, will neither have the will nor the moral authority to end the system in other walks of life. The modernisation of management of Indian capitalism is part of an overall social, political and economic modernisation of the country.

INVESTIGATION

usiness is never brisk in the stockmarkets on the days preceding the budget. It was even worse this time as months of recession and tight money had been keeping the market depressed. One of the few companies whose shares did not reflect the general trend was the Delhi Cloth and General Mills Company Limited (DCM). Founded by Lala Shri Ram, the Delhi-based company which manufactures textiles, chemicals, fertilisers, rayon, sugar, vanaspati, computers and a wide range of engineering goods is ranked fifth among the country's industrial giants in terms of assets (1982 assets: Rs 156 crores) and fourth in terms of sales (1982 sales: Rs 420 crores). But those were not the reasons for the rising value of its shares. Till the end of January a Rs 25 share had been worth only about Rs 31 and even in the first week of February in spite of some speculative buying, the price hovered between Rs 34 and Rs 36.

However, from the second week of February DCM shares seemed to be in heavy demand at the Delhi stock exchange. The price at the end of the week was Rs 39. The following week the price crossed the Rs 40 mark and on 28 February, the day the union finance minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, presented the budget, a DCM share was fetching a price of Rs 54.37—more than twice its face value. Although the sudden spurt in the value of DCM shares intrigued many, nobody could yet really explain why this was happening.

At about the same time another Delhi-based industrial giant, Escorts, also appeared to be drawing substantial investment support for its shares. Escorts, the market leaders in tractors and motorcycles, is among the fastest growing industrial establishments in India. Founded by a Delhi industrialist H.P. Nanda, its sales have multiplied six times in ten years-from Rs 42 crores to the present Rs 240 crores. With a massive expansion programme now underway, sales are likely to exceed Rs 300 crores in another five years. Escorts shares therefore, have always been a speculator's choice: a ten-rupee share fetched around Rs 40 at the end of January. During February the value appreciated further to reach Rs 54. However, as the hike was not as dramatic as that of DCM shares, for a while the trading in Escorts shares went virtually unnoticed.

Came March and there seemed to develop a scramble for DCM shares. In the first week the price went up further by about Rs 5 and in the following week by another Rs 4 touching Rs 60. That made marketmen really sit up. It was by now evident that some big boys were at play. The initial suspicion was that

Deals Wit

When UK-based industrialist Swraj Paul started buying up the Escorts, the Indian industrialists panicked. This was a challe ge rare display of togetherness the Indian industrialists joined a minority shares, in their battle against Swraj Paul. TO Some of India's richest and most powerful people.

one of Lala Shri Ram's two sons, Bharat Ram and Charat Ram, was picking up shares from the market to increase his hold over the company. Bharat Ram, the elder of the two brothers, is the chairman of the board of directors of DCM. His eldest son Vinay Bharat Ram is also on the board. Although Charat Ram as the managing director, is ranked number two in the company's hierarchy, none of his immediate family

members are on the DCM board. Insiders have long known that all is not well within the Shri Ram family, which owns about ten per cent of DCM's 80.25,272 equity shares, enough to control the company. Many thought the heavy trading to be a manifestation of a family war.

This turned out to be untrue. But if neither Bharat Ram nor Charat Ram was buying the shares, who was? The company, of late, had not been doing

It hardly looks like the place where lakhs of rupees change hands in a matter of minutes. A narrow passage, most of which is taken up by piles of gunny bags and pieces of broken furniture, leads to a shabby concrete building next to a cinema hall in Connaught Place, the heart of Delhi, where the Delhi stock exchange is housed. Despite the stern message—'Do not soil the building'—prominently displayed all over the place, the corridor is liberally splashed with paan stains.

At the end of the corridor is a large hall which even on a dull day has that vigorous look of a crowded railway platform. It is here that a shoving, sweating mob transacts business amidst unintelligible shouts and equally unintelligible hand signals. The noise is deafening. To the uninitiated the place may appear to be a madhouse with a crowd some ten deep, milling and jostling in front of three large blackboards on which are shakily scribbled rows of figures in chalk. The figures indicate the fluctuations in the share prices of various companies. For quite some time now three companies— . DCM, Escorts, and Swadeshi Polytexhave been dominating the blackboard with the largest number of figures being shown against their names. The bidding closes at two pm every day and figures are despatched to newspapers for publication.

The cent



A view of Delhi stock exchange: action and cite

Dominating the hall, which is painted at the turgid green, are appropriately enough, both the figures of Tirupati, Ganesh and Lake shmi, portrayed in vivid red, silver and shar gold. The deities look down on the milling shar screeching crowd below, discerning perhaps some method to all the madness ami Brokers (some 110 are registered with the Delhi stock exchange) who say, wish to but fully

nn A Dea

un hares of two Delhi-based blue chip companies, DCM and lleige to the dynastic rule of the corporate giants in India. In a ed andswith the families managing DCM and Escorts with ONSHAR PANDIT pieces together the full story of how people were frightened by a threat from abroad.

> as well as in the past. Its net profits had dropped sharply from Rs 6.78 crores in 1980-81 to Rs 3.11 crores in 1981-82. Gross returns on the investments made in DCM at current prices of these shares were hardly likely to be more than four per cent. No businessman would risk his money on such shares unless he was planning to eventually take over the management of the company. Suspicion hovered over R.P. Goenka, who

has become famous for the way he has expanded his empire. Charat Ram, in a letter to his elder brother Bharat, mentioned such a thought. But nobody could be sure. Since DCM shares were registered in forward list, the actual delivery could be made within 14 days after the purchase. Again, a broker might take delivery on behalf of the actual purchaser and thus prevent the identity of the buyer from being known. The

buyer could remain anonymous till the shares had actually been transferred and registered in the books of the company. The annual general meeting of the DCM's stockholders is due in November and if the buyer so chose he could register the shares in his name at any time till the company's books closed shortly before the general meeting.

While looking for a clue to the identity of the phantom buyer, Bharat Ram stumbled upon a disturbing piece of information: Charat Ram had apparently sold 165,000 DCM shares (about two per cent of DCM's equity shares) held by a family trust which he was managing. Charat Ram's explanation was that he did it because the tax concessions on trust holdings had been withdrawn in the current budget. Under normal conditions that would have passed unnoticed and even been appreciated by family members as an example of good tax management. Indeed, the Shri Ram family had, for years, been selling shares to meet their wealth tax obligations. This year the incidence of wealth tax on the family was even higher because of a run-up in DCM share prices during the period ending on 31 March which is the bench mark for calculating the wealth tax obligations.

On another occasion Bharat Ram too might have been tempted to sell some shares because of the higher share price. For a long time nobody in the market knew about the sales made by Charat Ram. The inference: the sales were transacted in a single lot through a single broker-and, obviously, for a single buyer. That again was a sign of the buyer being a big fish. Whatever Charat Ram's reasons were for unloading such a substantial chunk of shares in the market when someone seemed to be on a buying spree, it disturbed Bhar-

at Ram considerably.

at Ram finally decided to have a chat with R.P. Goenka. He was confident that if R.P. Goenka was after DCM, he might be persuaded to pull out. Only recently, Goenka had been dissuaded from taking over a well managed family establishment—Walchand group's Premier Automobiles Limited, the manufacturer of the Fiat cars in India—when he was all set for the kill. When Goenka was

7 ith these and quite a few other

questions bothering him, Bhar-

Engineering, one after another, nobody bothered very much about what he was doing: his targets were not doing very well and very few investors were inclined to bid for them. But when Goenka turned his eyes on PAL all the top industrialists of the country including the Tatas and the Birlas stood behind the Wal-

acquiring Ceat Tyres and Kamani

re stage



xcite ment

the shares of a particular company, say, DCM, will keep shouting, "DCM, DCM, 37 li," meaning their client wants to buy DCM shares at a rate of Rs 37 each. They will then be approached by another broker whose client wants to sell. Somehow, amidst the din, they will reach an agreement and the transaction will be successfully executed. For those shares listed for

spot delivery, payments are made within three days and for those shares listed for forward trading, payments are made every two weeks under the fortnightly payment system. The client will, of course, have an advance.

Just outside the hall is a canteen, which is somewhat sparsely patronised, selling mouldy looking rusks, Marie biscuits and strong, orange coloured tea. Tucked away in every available inch of space, both upstairs and downstairs, are narrow cubby holes, which are the offices of the brokers. Into each of these four square feet of space are crammed several tables, a typewriter and constantly ringing telephones. But under the ubiquitous icon of Lakshmi, the brokers sit, idly almost, placidly chewing paan.

The Delhi stock exchange is looking for more spacious accommodation, an official of the exchange said. The stock exchange is an independent association which employs its own staff but is under the finance ministry. The official admitted the recent spate of activity has been "unprecedented." Never before have so many fluctuations in share prices and so much buying and selling taken place. Looking at the noisy crowd, it was amazing to think that the fate of Indian industry was being decided in those rather seedy, down-at-heel surcoundings.

Ranjana Sengupta

The great debate

MRS INDIRA GANDHI: The private sector thinks only of profits. So this is what really creates a problem. Already we have situations where people try to limit production in order to keep up prices.

PRANAB MUKHERJEE, Finance minister: The management must enjoy the confidence of their shareholders. Financial institutions will support them so long as the managements prove their worth.



RAJIV GANDHI: Unless our financial institutions are careful, we will have foreign agencies, through Indians abroad, taking over companies which are running well.

DHIRUBHAI AMBANI, Chairman, Reliance Textiles: Takeovers are the law of corporate democracy.

- B. K. BIRLA, Chairman, Century Spinning and Manufacturing Company: Financial institutions should not encourage ousting of good management.
- R. RAMANATHAN, President, Madras Stock Exchange: We do not want short-term speculators to benefit at the cost of real investors.
- C. NARAYANASWAMY, President, Sheshasayee Group: Do not confuse public finance institutions with public interest.
- M. K. MODI, President, West U.P. Chamber of Commerce and Industry: The reason why not many good managed companies are coming forward to take over sick units is that the existing government procedure is very cumbersome.

JAHAR SENGUPTA, President, Assocham: An absentee-landlord, for that is what the non-resident Indian in fact is, should certainly not be permitted to destabilise well-run companies.

D. C. KOTHARI, Industrialist: The convertibility clause has clearly outlived its usefulness.

RAUNAQ SINGH, former President, Assocham: The kind of freefor-all takeover bids where the big fish swallows the smaller ones, is, however, not normally viewed with favour by our government.

BHARAT RAM, Chairman, DCM: Whoever is planning to take over our companies is obviously interested in the power that acquiring the companies will give (to him).

MANMOHAN SINGH, Governor, Reserve Bank of India: We shall not allow any enterprise in India to become a bubble on the whirlpool of international speculation.

M. K. KUMAR, President, Madras Chamber of Commerce: Familycontrolled companies sometimes hit the snag because of internecine quarrels.

DR B. B. GHOSH, Adviser, Calcutta Stock Exchange: Takeovers in India are irrational in the sense that minority non-controlling interests are not given a choice to decide whether they want to stay with the new management or not.

ASHOK JAIN, President, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry: In India, there are no proper guidelines to ensure that takeover bids are not mere manipulations in shareholding.



J. R. D. TATA: I could be next.

R.P. GOENKA, Industrialist: In a competition one has to win and another has to lose. It is my belief that the financial institutions, till today, have been taking a mature view.

L. R. PURI, Executive Director, J K Group and Company Law Expert: Financial institutions have no business to enter into secret negotiations, particularly if the management is good...

SURINDER PAUL, Chairman, Apeejay Group: Every day you see half page ads in the papers asking people to buy shares. All we are doing is buying shares.

chands to put pressure on Goenka to spare PAL. The argument that was advanced then was that since PAL was doing well under the management of the original promoters, there was no justification for anybody to bid for its control. The message was clear: family managed companies should be left undisturbed unless they had fallen on bad days. By the norm thus established, Bharat Ram thought, DCM too was entitled to a reprieve.

On 20 March Bharat Ram invited R.P. Goenka to dinner at his residence. Goenka's wife and one of his sons were also present at the dinner. There Goenka clearly told Bharat Ram that he was not bidding for DCM. He, in fact, was as curious as anybody else to find out who the real bidder was. Together they scratched their heads. Anyone who appeared to be a potential buyer was considered- Nusli Wadia of Bombay Dyeing, Dhirubhai Ambani of Re-liance Textiles, the south Indian business baron Vittal Mallya, and a host of other names cropped up. However, on close scrutiny they concluded that none of the important Indian businessmen were behind the hectic purchases of DCM shares. They dismissed the possibility of any Indian industrialist playing the market on two grounds: firstly, none of the Indian businessmen would dare to take on two of the country's industrial giants at a single go; second, hardly any Indian industrialist had that much of spare white money to make what was beginning to look like the biggest takeover bid ever witnessed in the country. Even by a conservative estimate to make the investment a success a staggering Rs 10 crores was needed. This was beyond the resources of Indian businessmen because of the incidence of wealth tax and estate duty: the estate duty alone on any assets over Rs 20 lakhs is levied at the rate of 85 per cent.

And once they ruled out the Indian businessmen from their reckoning the only other possibility that Bharat Ram and Goenka could think of was the non-resident Indians. Many Indian businessmen settled abroad had access to large funds; their investments in India attracted less tax and they could take over an Indian company for virtually peanuts compared to the cost and efforts involved in taking over a company abroad. And the first name that came to their minds was that of the UK-based Indian industrialist, Swraj Paul.

Who else but Swraj Paul could have such daring and dexterity? Only a person with a lot of money and considerable clout with the powers that be in India could have ventured skirmishes with two of the country's largest corporate conglomerates. And Swraj Paul had both. Dubbed as the "takeover king" in Britain for raiding a number of companies successfully, the latest

being the Birmingham-based engineering company, the Barton group, which he acquired in just one hour by investing £7.9 million in cash, Paul's investment in shares during the last couple of months alone is over £13 million. And having tasted blood in his adopted homeland (he is a British citizen), could he stay away from his former country?

But what singled him out from other Indian business barons doing well abroad—the shipping magnate Ravi Tikkoo, Hong Kong-based multimillionaire Hari Harilela, or the international traders like the Hindujas, the Sethias and the Guptas were his political connections. He was among the very few Indian industrialists who had remained loyal to Mrs Gandhi during her most difficult days of the Janata rule. In 1978 he played host to Mrs Gandhi in Britain and gave her a reception fit for a queen. Add to this Paul's excellent speculative instinct and you have a winning combination.

By the end of March the situation was rather desperate. On March 31 DCM shares sold at around Rs 70, Escorts at close to Rs 60. By then the Escorts chairman H.P. Nanda too had concluded through a process of elimination that it had to be Swraj Paul who was buying both his and the DCM shares. Nanda, who is distantly related to the Paul family, called up the eldest of the Paul brothers, Stya, in Delhi to find out what Swraj was up to. Stya denied having any knowledge of the operations of any of his brothers.

Neither Bharat Ram nor H. P. Nanda could afford to take the threat lightly anymore. Like the Shri Ram family, the stakes of the Nandas in Escorts were very thin—just about five per cent of 1,33,77,208 equity shares. Indeed, most of the large Indian joint stock companies are managed by families which own and control no more than five to ten per cent of their shares. At any rate, according to law, the promoter's or his family's share in a company can-

not be more than 40 per cent of the total stocks. Recent amendments to the law restrict it to just about 20 per cent for new ventures. Besides, high taxes on income, wealth and capital gains make large stockholding unprofitable. So what the industrialists have been doing is to spread their capital thinly over a large number of companies and thus expand their empires.

As a result, the public financial institutions through which most investible funds are channelised to the industry, are now the country's biggest shareholders. These institutions together hold over 25 per cent of the shares of almost all the major industrial giants in the country, and in many the holdings exceed 50 per cent. The shares have been accumulated against their investments in the private corporate sector since the mid-50's. The financial institutions have the option to convert up to 20 per cent of the term loans into equity holding. It is not surprising, therefore, that total institutional investment in corporate shares alone stands at a staggering Rs 750 crores, with the Unit Trust of India, the Life Insurance Comapany and the General Insurance companies holding shares worth Rs 600 crores.

So if the Rams and the Nandas were alarmed by a rapid run-up in DCM and Escorts share prices, they had every reason to be. Since a large chunk of the shares—around 43 per cent in the case of DCM and around 54 per cent in the case of Escorts—were held by the financial institutions, anyone picking up some shares from the market could, with the help of the financial institutions, take over the companies.

The takeover of Bombay Burmah Corporation is a case in point. In 1980 Nusli Wadiaof Bombay Dyeing bought a block of nine per cent of Bombay Burmah shares from the previous managers of the company, Pratapsingh Vissanji and associates. It then took him another two years to acquire another six per cent of the

shares from the market. But in the next two months, July and August 1982, Wadia's holding suddenly jumped to 27 per cent. The reason: the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), a public financial institution, holding substantial shares in the company, decided to shed some of its shares to Wadia so that he could gain control of the company. This is not the only example of financial institutions supporting takeover bids. But before Swraj Paul's entry into the market the Indian industrialists did not realise that their control over the companies they manage could not continue without the support of the financial institutions.

Many read in Swraj Paul's sudden raid on two major Indian companies a much deeper meaning. They reasoned that by now Mrs Gandhi must be reconciled to the idea that the threat of nationalisation would not scare or discipline. Indian industrialists anymore. Besides, she might not be very keen on nationalising industries because of the public sector undertakings' poor track record. But at the same time she needed a Damocles' sword over the heads of Indian industrialists. And Swraj Paul might have been brought in to play Babasaheb Bhosale to the Antulays in the industry.

Now, Bharat Ram and H.P. Nanda ▼started to pull their political strings—and they had quite a few. Bharat Ram's youngest son Vivek Bharat Ram and H.P. Nanda's elder son Rajan Nanda sought their schoolmate Rajiv Gandhi's help. Together and individually the Rams and the Nandas made representations to important politicians and officials. They went to almost everyone of influence in Delhi: finance minister Pranab Mukherjee, the PM's principal secretary, P.C. Alexander, the secretary in the department of economic affairs, M. Narasimham, and the chairman of the economic administration reforms commission, L.K. Jha. They were too willing to talk to anyone who cared to listen. At the same time they spurred their respective chambers of commerce into action—not that the chambers needed any persuasion.

The executive committee of the powerful Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI), one of two apex bodies of the chambers of commerce in the country, which met in Delhi on 1 April to discuss matters pertaining to its 56th annual general meeting to be held in the capital on the following day, spent most of its time discussing Swraj Paul's takeover bids and how to counter them. At about the same time, the members of the other powerful organisation of the Indian industrialists, the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industries (Assocham) also started exchanging views informally among themselves

Bharat Ram and Charat Ram: a struggle for survival





'Swraj Paul's transactions are illegal'

VINAY BHARAT RAM tells SUNDAY

Vinay Bharat Ram, 45, the eldest of Dr Bharat Ram's three sons is the deputy managing director of DCM. With a Masters in Business Administration from Ann Arbor in Michigan, USA, and a PhD from Delhi University, he started at the bottom of the ladder in 1960 he joined one of the DCM mills as a trainee, clocking in through the workers' gate and drawing a monthly salary of Rs 750. In 1961, he took charge of the mill and only three months ago he was promoted to his present position. In an interview with RANJANA SENGUPTA at his office in New Delhi, Vinay Bharat Ram defends the hereditary control of Indian companies. Excerpts:

Q: Your father, Dr Bharat Ram, is being quoted as saying that he does not believe in the Americantype of professionalism where men change companies frequently. But if American and Japanese companies can perform efficiently without hereditary control, why can't we?

A: It is not true that American and Japanese companies are not managed by family members. Statistically, a very large number of companies are managed by families. Our own collaborator, Toyota of Japan, is managed by the Toyota family.

Q: Mr Swraj Paul has stated that it is time that Indian companies moved from hereditary control to financial management. What is

your comment on this?

A: This topic has been discussed since the rise of capitalism. Mr Paul's credentials (to raise this topic)-whether academic or based on lifestyle—I really don't know. In principle I agree. The consequences (of not employing professional management) are apparent from the textile industry, which was nationalised because of family ownership to the detriment of the interest of the companies. But they who manage on the basis of aptitude, talent and competence are asprofessional as any so-called managers. In this company there are only six or seven executives (from the Shri Ram family) including my cousin and myself, who have parallel responsibilities—that is not such a large number. In fact, professionalism is necessary but not sufficient-to this must be added an entrepreneurial instinct.

Q: Another of Mr Paul's charges is that in certain Indian companies, even though the percentage of shares held by the family is quite small, they still exercise total control and the interests of the other shareholders are ignored.

A: The public financial institutions hold about 40 per cent of DCM shares. This (Mr Paul's charge) would imply that they are not in a position to take care of their own interests. Their directors sit on the board to ensure that shareholders enjoy the benefits of efficient management. I would like to add that Mr Paul has been quoted in *The* Telegraph (30 April) as saying that the financial condition of companies like this one is shocking. Our financial condition is excellent as reflected in the dividends, and certainly much more bright when compared to Mr Paul's own companies in India. Before teaching Indian businessmen how to manage companies, he should prove his own credentials by setting up industries in India, especially in the field of high technology.



V.B.Ram: 'we manage better'

Q: What is behind the governmen's attractive offer to nonresident Indians to invest in companies here?

A: (This is) a syndrome of bringing foreign exchange into India through Indians settled abroad. It is a syndrome because the steps by which it should be brought in were not thought over very clearly.

Q: Do you think Mr Swraj Paul had prior knowledge that these concessions to non-resident Indians

were in the offing?

A: Well, the purchases of shares started well in advance of the bill being passed, which makes these transactions illegal.

Q: What percentage of DCM shares does Mr Swraj Paul hold today?

A: He claims around nine per cent. But we don't know as nothing has been registered yet. Q: Are you going to register these shares?

A: I will not divulge this.

Q: It is widely believed that differences between Dr Charat Ram and Dr Bharat Ram existed, and this aided Mr Paul's takeover bid.

A: Such differences are always

exaggerated by outsiders.

Q: Dr Charat Ram offloaded one lakh DCM shares on the market recently, necessitated by the withdrawal of tax concessions to the trusts that held company shares. But he could have waited till the November expiry date, and avoided aggravating the crisis.

A: I have nothing to say on this.

Q: What measures are you taking to stall Mr Paul? Will the government's new ceiling of five per cent help?

A: It will certainly restrict purchases to a certain limit. We are also buying shares to raise our own

percentage.

Q: Does the controversial land transfer in UP to DCM by the UP government have any connection with your present troubles? It is said that the land was owned by Mr A. P. Sareen, a relative of Mr R.K. Dhawan.

A: The problem in Ghaziabad is between Mr Sareen and the UP government. We don't come into the picture as we were allotted the land

by the UP government.

Q: What are the long-term implications of this type of investment

by non-resident Indians?

A: As a policy, the country will lose a considerable amount of foreign exchange. Since the repatriation of foreign exchange is confined not just to dividends but also to speculative gains which foreign residents make on the stock market, and given the large amounts of money they have, they can make huge profits. This is not a productive use of capital.

Q:Do you feel these concessions

to non-residents are fair?

A: I totally agree with what Mr Rajiv Gandhi said in Parliament, that there are two separate yardsticks for Indian and non-resident Indian businessmen in terms of taxation and other financial benefits.

Q: Is it true that you, along with Mr Rajan Nanda, wrote the speech that Mr Rajiv Gandhi made in Parliament on 29 April, when he proposed that a two per cent ceiling be imposed on investment by nonresident Indians?

A: (laughs) Nothing of the kind.

on the same question at the request of one of their past presidents, H.P. Nanda. Members of both FICCI and the Assocham were generally agreed that if Swraj Paul could not be halted now it might set a trend which could spell doom for many a big industrialist in the country. If it was DCM and Escorts today, it could be Tatas and Goenkas tomorrow.

Indeed, the rumours were that DCM and Escorts were just appetisers. Swraj Paul, according to these rumours, had actually set his eyes for the main course on the giant corporate conglomerate of the countrythe Tatas. One school of thought was that this was to take revenge for losing out to the Tatas only recently in the battle for the control of the Tinplate Corporation. In that war the Tatas, without adding much to their original holding, ousted Swraj Paul's elder brother Jit Paul who was holding substantial shares bought from the UK shareholders, simply by marshalling the support of the financial institutions behind them. Theoretically, the Tatas are as vulnerable as DCM or Escorts to any determined takeover bid. Since the Tata family holdings in most Tata enterprises would not be more than five per cent of all the shares. Besides, after J.R.D. Tata, who has no children, the question of who should succeed him can rip the empire apart. Although most seasoned observers dismissed the conjecture as something of an overreaction, it brought home the point that none of the Indian industrialists—and that includes the Tatas and the Birlas-stood on firm ground.

But before the industrialists took any decisive step they wanted to know for certain that it was Swraj Paul who was buying the shares of DCM and Escorts. On 2 April, the day the FICCI was holding its annual general meeting in Delhi, Swraj Paul received the Padma Bhushan from President Zail Singh. Swraj Paul was among the two foreigners—the other being the director-producer of the film Gandhi, Richard Attenborough-to figure in this year's national honours list. The same evening, R.P. Goenka, presumably as an emissary of the Indian industrialists, met Swraj Paul to find out if the suspicions were justified. After beating around the bush for quite a while Paul finally confirmed it: yes, he was buying the shares.

Swraj Paul was clearly planning his gambit for quite some time. As far back as in January some Indian industrialists who met him in Switzerland got the impression that he was going to make a bid for some Indian companies. They, of course, did not know which companies Paul had in mind. He chose DCM and Escorts as his targets because they had large accumulated reserves, fairly profitable operations, the owners' stake was low with a much larger

shareholding with public financial institutions and most important, the families which owned these companies were going through internal problems. Just as Bharat Ram and Charat Ram did not always see eye to eye, two important members of the Nanda family, Rajan Nanda (H.P. Nanda's son), the president of the company, Dolly Nanda (H.P. Nanda's sister-in-law), do not mix even socially.

What however, intrigued Indian industrialists most was that Swraj Paul started buying DCM and Escorts shares long before the union budget was presented. Without the kind of incentives offered in the budget his operations would have been unprofitable. Whether he had any advance indication of what was coming or not, he appears to have gained from the budget proposals. The tax concessions offered, made India a virtual tax haven for non-resident investors. The total incidence of income tax and wealth tax on income derived from such investments in India was put at 22.5 per cent as against more than 85 per cent on a comparable level of income for local investors The budget proposals also did not make any distinction between nonresident Indians holding Indian passports and non-residents holding foreign citizenship: both categories of non-residents were welcome. It any distinction had been made then Swraj Paul, being a British citizen. could not have entered the Indian market. Moreover, the budget proposals permitted share investment by overseas companies in which nonresident Indians had at least 60 per cent of the shares. Very few non resident Indians, including the richest, have that kind of shareholding in anv company abroad; Paul has.

By 15 April, the Indian owners began their counter-offensive. Bharat Ram started buying back DCM shares from the market at the new higher ruling price. DCM shares touched a peak of Rs 80 on 2 May. By that time Bharat Ram had picked up around 700,000 shares using the surplus funds from a holding company in Madras; Swraj Paul's estimated tally of shares was 6,00,000. In Escorts, Nanda called a board meeting in Delhi on 18 Aprimyhere 25,000 share transfers to what was described as "genuine shareholders" were approved. Since the Nandas did not have the kind of surplus funds that DCM could mobilise, they offered more liberal credit facilities to their distributors and ancillary product suppliers who bought Escorts shares from the market. The Nandas also withdrew Escorts shares from the forward list and placed them under the cash list. The difference between the two is that while delivery of the shares in the forward list can be delayed for 14 days, those under the cash list have to be transacted within three days from the day

of purchase. In that way the Nandas wanted to keep a track on trading in their shares. But the big guns were held back till Swraj Paul, from his London headquarters, while justifying his purchases attacked with considerable force of logic the concept of dynastic management of a company. Following this, the FICCl executive committee met in Bombay on 18 April in full strength and the only thing it discussed for three hours was: how to stop Swraj Paul. Then, in a rare show of togetherness almost all the top industrialists of the country gathered in New Delhi to place their case before the Prime Minister. But surprisingly Mrs Gandhi did not have the time to give such a distinguished and powerful group a hearing. So on 20 April a delegation of industrial barons which included men like J.R.D Tata, N.A. Palkhivala, A.K. Jain, Bharat Ram, H.P. Nanda, K.N. Modi, Hari Shanker Singhania, L.M. Thapar and K.C. Mahindra called on finance minister Pranab Mukherjee to express their fears. Meanwhile, all kinds of rumours had flooded the market. There were reports that Swraj Paul was buying shares on instructions from one of the highest authorities in the country (Mrs Gandhi excluded). Then there were rumours that he had set apart £10 million to finance his takeover bids. His brother Surrinder Paul was quoted as saying that Swraj Paul was planning to takeover eight or nine Indian companies.

Indian industrialists were shaken. Suddenly they discovered the "evils" of investments by nonresidents in Indian companies, conveniently forgetting that it was they who had been clamouring for liberalisation of the norms governing nonresident investments. Some of them had even pleaded for waiving the wealth tax on such investments. Till Swraj Paul entered the market such investments were welcome for the simple reason that this would have given them access to funds for expanding their holdings despite a tight money position in the country. Apart from this obvious economic reason there was another, a more covert one. The investments could be a conduit for converting black money into white. A memorandum circulated by DCM and Escorts claims: "Black money whether emanating from under invoicing or otherwise could flow back into India under the guise of non-resident investment..." That touches precisely the heart of the matter. Laundering black money into white in the country not only involves a massive and complicated operation, but the income generated from such investments is heavily taxed—to the extent of about 67 per cent-when the income is substantial. It is far less expensive to launder the black money through non-resident investments. A dollar in India now sells at

'We are too honest'

Har Parshad Nanda, the 65-year-old chairman of Escorts (India) Ltd, has been fighting a grim battle to retain his family's control over the company which he has built up from scratch to the tenth largest industrial concern in the country. A science graduate, Mr Nanda is also on the board of directors of a number of companies including Thompson Press (India) Ltd, Sharpedge Ltd and Lintas He spoke to Sunday in his plush office in Connaught Place, Delhi. Excerpts:

Q: What is behind the government's attractive offer to nonresident Indians to invest in this country? When did this first come up?

A: This whole excercise began at the UK-India seminar in June 1982 held in London at the Confederation of British Industries. The nonresident Indian businessmen proposed that since the British industry was then in recession, they could acquire sophisticated technology and set up new investments in India and create new industries in the country. They were prepared to invest their funds, knowledge and contacts in these new ventures. They stipulated, however, that their investment should be free of wealth tax, capital gains tax and that the total tax impact should not be more than 20 per cent. This was agreed to and we all thought it was an excellent gesture and we all supported it. The professionals, on the other hand, said they would like to invest in good companies in which Indian public financial institutions had heavy investmentsthere are about 300 such companies. At that time, investments by non-resident Indians in such companies were limited to one per cent with a maximum ceiling of one lakh per individual. So they requested the government to remove this ceiling. This was agreed to. along with other concessions. Mr L.K. Jha himself drafted the proposal on his return to India. Not one of us at that time thought that this could be abused. As Mr Rajiv Gandhi said the other day, "They (the non-resident Indians) are our brothers and if they want to put their foreign exchange in this country, they are welcome." These businessmen—I call them the nomads of India-have avoided the taxation of any country for 20 years, that is how they have amassed so much wealth.

Q: When did you first realise what was happening?

A: When in the first week of April, my shares started going up, I went to the finance minister, and said, "Look here, this non-resident money is coming in." Nobody believed it till Swraj Paul said in an

H.P. NANDA tells SUNDAY



H.P. Nanda: troubled times

interview to the Indian press, 'Yes, I am acquiring the shares of Delhi Cloth Mills (DCM) and Escorts.'

Q: What percentage of Escorts share is held by Mr Swraj Paul today?

A: Not a single one at present. He is acquiring them but no share has yer been registered. He has pumped in, through his company Caparo, a total amount of Rs 11 crores, according to a newspaper report. But I challenge him to buy the shares at any value from those shareholders who have been associated with the company (Escorts) for 20 years. They swear by me. If these people ever come to me saying that they have to sell shares for some reason, I will be their buyer. We are not going to permit him to buy a single share in this company.

Q: What are the long-term implications of this type of investment by non-resident Indians for this country?

A: The government should realise that it is unadvisable to allow companies controlled by non-resident Indians from abroad to come in this way. These companies may later be acquired by multinational corporations, or some FERA companies or even be a channel for CIA or OPEC money. With companies abroad registered in the Bahamas, Switzerland or Malta, the government will have no means to find out the ownership.

Q: Do you suspect any collusion between the government and Mr Swraj Paul in formulating this investment policy? Mr Paul is after all a close friend of Mrs Gandhi.

A: Obviously not. He thought that having been such a benefactor of Mrs Gandhi and having been awarded Padma Bhushan and having funded the UK-India seminar, he was assured of her support. Obviously not. Because otherwise Mr Rajiv Gandhi would not have

made a statement spelling out the danger of such a thing. Nor would Mr Pranab Mukherjee have said that he had given categorical instructions to the financial institutions that they must support managements which have a good record.

Q: Then you do not anticipate the eventuality of the financial institutions supporting Mr Paul's nominees on the Escorts board?

A: According to their present instructions, they will not.

Q: Why did Swraj Paul decide to buy the shares of Escorts, DCM and

A: He thought these were companies with a very low equity holding by the owners. Then, the assets of Escorts will, by 1983-84 be Rs 200 crores. The sales turnover is Rs 240 crores. The company is expanding—he obviously thought it was

Q: Mr Swraj Paul has claimed that Indian companies are managed in a very 'feudal' way, saying that there should be a distinction between owners and managers. Would you like to comment?

ready-made for him.

A: Apeejay is managed by the Paul family. It is not that I can appoint my sons on the board of Escorts—it has to have the approval of all the shareholders and the directors nominated by the financial institutions. I am the managing director and I have three joint managing directors, two of whom are my sons. The third is Mr Hazarika, a professional, who is no relative of mine. He has been in the company for 32 years. The directors on my board are there because of their merit. (Field Marshal) Manekshaw, Mr K.B. Lal (former detence secretary), Mr S. Ranganathan (former Auditor-General) and others on the board are distinguished men.

Q: Why were these takeover bids by non-resident Indians not foreseen by the government? Do you think the rules were deliberately formulated to oblige some people or was it simply a loophole that was overlooked?

A: (It was not foreseen because)
We are too honest operators in this
country. So is our government.
They have levied all sorts of taxes
on us (resident Indians), so we
thought that maybe these people
(non-resident Indian businessmen)
will come and help us.

Q: But your personal view is that there was no collusion between Mr Paul and the government.

A: Well the British press is saying so, and so are some sections of the Indian press.

O: And your view?

A: I have no personal knowledge. I can't say.

a premium of about 30 per cent or so. Pick up the dollars (or pounds) with your black money, get it transferred to a numbered account in Zurich or Geneva (it is far easier than you think), and draw from it whenever necessary through frontmen lined up abroad and the result: happiness. By bringing in the money thus converted as non-resident investment. you save both in the cost of laundering and the taxes on income generated by it. What is more, you can repatriate the income. That means you now have substantial white money in foreign currency, of course in the name of your frontmen abroad. The money thus accumulated is known to have been used to purchase shares of Indian companies held by foreigners.

However, having met their match in Swraj Paul the Indian industrialists started crying wolf. Although much of their noise was against substantial single investments by nonresidents, what the industrialists were really afraid of was the clout of the financial institutions. Till now they had taken for granted that the financial institutions would always be on the side of the families managing a company with minority shares. What the Indian industrialists wanted was to be reassured that the financial institutions would not use their power through their substantial shareholding to dump the families who own the industrial houses with minority shares. As in politics so in business, every cause needs its justification. Swraj Paul gave that justification to the Indian industrialists-and more. By projecting themselves as underdogs and presenting the "grim" picture of a foreigner trying to disinvest old and venerable industrialists from their proud possessions which they had built up over the years through great enterprise, the industrialists clearly hoped to gain considerable public sympathy in the country. And they, in fact, did get that sympathy.

The industrialists pursued their 上 campaign through all available forum asking the government to defranchise non-resident shareholders and impose a ceiling of two per cent

on their share holding with a company. Pressures were built up from every quarter. But apart from assuring them that the government was against disturbing the status quo in well managed companies, finance minister Pranab Mukherjee gave no indication that the government wanted Swraj Paul to hold his punches. Only after some nasty rumours involving the Prime Minister and her family had started circulating in the capital did the government appear to be in a mood to relent.

There were suggestions that the money which was coming into India was a part of political pay offs accumulated over the years in foreign banks and was now being laundered. Some thought that with the next general election due in another year, Mrs Gandhi deliberately wanted to put a scare into the industrialists—a major source of election funds—so that they contributed even more liberally to her party this time: Even such absurd propositions, like the one which said that Swraj Paul's DCM takeover bid was a manifestation of a war by proxy between Rajiv Gandhi and the PM's special assistant R.K. Dhawan, gained currency. The speculation was based on a slender evidence: Rajiv Gandhi had studied with the sons of both Bharat Ram and H.P. Nanda and therefore, it was assumed that he supported the present managements of Escorts and DCM; and since DCM was fighting a case against one of Dhawan's relatives over some property disputes, Dhawan, it was thought,was on Swraj Paul's side. Arun Nehru's name was also, inevitably when it comes to money, dragged in.

The government and especially Mrs Gandhi could hardly afford such rumours. Now, enter, formally, Rajiv Gandhi. In one of his rare speeches in Parliament, the MP from Amethi told the House on 29 April that he wanted a ceiling of two per cent of the shares imposed on non-resident holdings in an Indian company. Although finance minister Pranab Mukherjee had told BJP leader Atal Behari Vajpayee on 27 April that the government might think of something to protect the interests of Indian industrialists he did not give any

clue to the government's thinking when he presented the Finance Bill on the following day to put the budget proposals into effect. If the government was thinking of modifying the budget proposals regarding non-resident investments the Finance Bill did not reflect it. But after Rajiv Gandhi had expressed his views, the finance minister did tell Parliament on 2 May of the government's decision to restrict aggregate non-resident holdings in any one Indian company to a maximum of five per cent of total paid up equity shares of that company. That clearly was a sop. For a close scrutiny of his statement would show that even this restriction could be circumvented with the permission of the Reserve Bank of India. Besides, what could prevent a non-resident, holding even five per cent of the shares, from taking over a company with the backing of the financial institutions? And why was the ceiling fixed at five per cent? The marketmen's guess was that Swraj Paul had already accumulated that much of shares if not more. However, Mukherjce's statement accomplished what it wanted to: it effectively lulled the public debate on the subject.

Swraj Paul was thus halted, at least for the moment, not because of noises made by the industrialists or because of their political contacts. The government had to revise its decision regarding non-resident investments for the same reason that the Bihar Press Bill could not be pushed through. It had to respond to public reaction. Had Swraj Paul chosen a company other than DCM he would have possibly succeeded. But DCM is much more than an industrial organisation—it is a kind of an institution in Delhi which either directly or indirectly provides bread to one out of every five persons in the capital. It is the excellent image of the company and its founding father, Lala Shri Ram, which really offered DCM a temporary reprieve. One positive proof is that although Swraj Paul was buying the shares of both DCM and Escorts simultaneously, most of the noise was over the purchase of DCM shares. H.P. Nanda survived by association

The war, however, is by no means over. The next roumd will be fought over the registration of the shares. The present board of DCM and Escorts will certainly refuse to register them. That leaves Swraj Paul with only one option: to take the battle to the court. Of course, he can sign a truce with the Rams and the Nandas by selling back the shares he had bought at the ruling market price or at any other negotiated price and make a tidy packet for himself. But that does not look likely at the moment, and with Swrai Paul now going after new targets-this time in Bombay—the battle is going to be a long one. The outcome is still anybody's guess.

Pranab Mukherjee flanked by present and past presidents A.K. Jain (1) and Dr. Devarajulu (r) at FICCI annual meeting in Delhi: party is over



'I have sowed the seeds of a revolution'

Expatriate businessman SWRAJ PAUL tells SUNDAY

Mr Swraj Paul, 52, chairman of the Caparo group, UK and Caparo industries, today presides over an industrial empire which includes ten private companies, two public-listed companies and 22 principal operating subsidiaries accounting for a turnover of £100 million annually. In addition, he has stakes in five major companies and has recently taken over the Barton group, a Birmingham-based tubing, industrial services

and engineering group.

Third of the four brothers of the Apeejay family, Mr Paul's business success in the United Kingdom has been meteoric. An engineering graduate and post-graduate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA in 1953, Mr Paul joined the family steel business in Calcutta. He went to England in 1966 to join his younger daughter Sujata who was suffering from leukaemia. It was not until 1969 that he started his business ventures in the United Kingdom after his ailing daughter died It was, he says, the start of a new life, as he had come to England under unfortunate circumstances and was,

therefore, eager to make a complete break with the

past.

The foundation stone of the Caparo empire was laid with an initial borrowing of £5,000 with which Paul started Steel (sales) Limited, a trading company. Natural Gas Tubes, a fledgling company leased to him their manufacturing of spiral-welded steel tubes at Huntingdon, near Oxford.

Trading was no doubt a far cry from engineering. But engineering eventually adds up to finance, management and getting on well with people, something Mr Paul adds with a smile, he is not doing too well at present. Mr Paul took over

Swraj Paul with Prince Charles: more Indian

the Natural Gas Tubes in 1970 and then in 1973-74 Paul worked out plans for setting up another welded steel tube mill at Tredegar, a development area in South Wales. There were teething problems but business he feels runs in his veins. And this, along with three other ingredients-luck, hard work and God's grace-led to success. The department of industries helped him with a loan, the Wales Development Area with cash grants, and with borrowings from the European Steel and Coal Community along with a little money from his own business he raised the necessary funds to form the nucleus of Caparo industries—the plant which was set up in 1977 with a capital outlay of £ 5 million and with an installed capacity of producing 1,00,000 tonnes a year. Meanwhile, Mr Paul had set up Seymour Shipping Limited, a small firm of ship managers and brokers in 1973, and Atlantic Merchants Limited. It was not until 1977 that he went into real estate and into the "even more interesting field of acquiring companies." Studying companies, he discovered, he says, that some were

sleepy, some needed a little shake up in management while some managements were just tired of managing their concerns. There were plenty of opportunities for Swraj Paul to step up his activities, for in the United Kingdom takeover battles are fought in a gentlemanly fashion with everybody wanting the best deal for the shareholder. So was born Caparo—the name originating from the first two initials of his partner-director, Mr A. J. Cavendish, Mr Swraj Paul himself and their solicitor, Mr Rothschild. Under the new banner, Caparo Investments and Caparo Properties came into being, while he took over Empire Plantations and Investments Limited in 1978 for £ 5 million, Singlo Holdings Limited in 1979 for £2.5 million, Oshorne, Hotel Torquay Limited in 1978 and Assam Frontier Holding Private Limited Company for £4.5 million in 1982. "All these companies which have come under my umbrella are much happier," says Mr Paul today. "We acquire companies, ginger them up, and keep the same management but see to it that they function better." It is always easier, he adds, to acquire a

company than to build one scratch. Every management gets tired, runs out of ideas as nobody can guide a company for an indefinite period of time. Companies need a change, as for instance, DCM, Escorts and this, he insists. includes Caparo, too. What everyone has to accept is that a situation may come when either the manager or the management steps aside, or is otherwise pushed aside by someone else. What is rarely realised is that companies cannot depend on the whims of one individual or family to look after the interests either of the worker or the employees.

Mr Paul certainly is not in the least afraid of fishing in the troubled heartland of industry and taking big risks. Caparo is, in fact, one of the more aggressive predatory companies in the British stock exchange. In November last year, Caparo Industries, in which Caparo group has a 75 per cent stake bought Karlock, a company manufacturing forklifts, for £4,000,000. This was followed in January this year by the purchase of Ralph and Co, a Birmingham-based private steel stockholding company for £2,50,000, and in February, E. Austin, the Hertfordshire forklift makers runnning at a loss of £2.5 million. The problem, says Mr Paul, is that in India this whole concept of acquisition has been given a bad name as the companies concerned are afraid to face themselves and the facts of life. In fact, the first time, according to him, that he has faced problems in taking over a company as an Indian was over his efforts to take over DCM and Escorts. SEETHA UNNINAYAR talked to Mr Swraj Paul, at his London headquarters to find out what he is up to. Excerpts:

Why do you think you have attracted so much controversy of late?

A: I really wish I knew. I just don't have an explana-

Q: How do you react to it?

A: It is not a question of reacting to these things. You have to accept them as they come. Controversy is always partly a result of ignorance, partly jealousy, partly distance...

Q: Do you think Indian industrialists are ignorant and jealous of your

success here?

A: I did not say that.

Q: But you said controversy is a result of ignorance and jealousy...

A: No. There is a controversy which has been there for the last few years and which has nothing to do with the recent controversy. The controversy earlier has been on the political side.

Q: Why do you think you were controversial on the political side?

A. I think I was, perhaps, one of the rare animals who decided that you have got to stand for your principles much more than just changing sides to suit conditions. The fact that I stood by Mrs Gandhi during the time when she was out of the government was something strange to the Indian public generally and more so to the Indian business community. They feel that I was crazy to do these things. It was madness. The feeling among the business community was that a businessman should not take the kind of view I had taken. They used to tell me so.

Q: Why? Because they feel that businessmen should not interfere in

politics?

A: No, they do interfere in Indian politics. But they do follow the rising sun instead of having some principles. This is not my opinion. Even the British newspapers have said so at least two to three times in the past.

Q: Is your support of Mrs Gandhi

entirely emotional?

A: No. It is not emotional alone. I very definitely believe that she is a great leader and also what is more unknown about Mrs Gandhi is that she is a great human being. Her human side is far more greater than even her being the Prime Minister. It is unfortunately a side that no Indian journalist or even foreign journalists have tried to bring out. It is very difficult for people to know that because she is a very private person. They think she is a very hard person which she is not. She is a very strong human being.

Q: Do you think she is good for the

country?

A

A: I think she is marvellous for the country and I think she is the best for the sountry.

Q: Despite the chaos now?

A: First of all we have to be really clear in our minds whether we believe in democracy. Dissidence or a little disturbance is nothing un-

The Emergency (in India) was declared democratically and under the Constitution.

known. The very fact that people are able to vent their feelings and show their anger is part of democracy. There are problems in England. There are problems in the United States. The British have not been able to sort out the Northern Ireland problem. Is the Assam problem any bigger than the Northern Ireland issue? Is the Punjab problem any bigger? But the very fact that it happens in India, makes the media take it up as if the end of the world has come. These are normal problems of a democratic system and the fact that they exist shows that there is democracy.

Q: Do you think Mrs Gandhi be-

lieves in democracy?

A: Oh, very strongly.

Q: What about the 1975

Emergency?

A: I would rather entrust democracy with her in India than with anybody else. I do not understand what was wrong with the Emergency. The word got maligned at that time, as an aura got built up that something wrong had happened and the opposition and people outside made use of it. The Emergency was declared when it was genuinely felt that there were forces internally and outside who were trying to disrupt a political system Emergency was declared democratically and under the Constitution. The only wrong thing was that certain abuses took place which nobody wants to defend. They took place as a lot of little men who got powers beyond their ability to use. abused those powers. Don't forget it was Mrs Gandhi who declared the Emergency and who lifted it, who declared elections, lost it and who handed over the government in a very democratic fashion to the government which was elected.

Q: Why do you think she surrounds herself with little people? With people like Antulays, Gundu Raos.

Jagannath Mishras?

A: These people are elected by the voters. It is a price for democracy you must pay. You can only select out of those the voters elect. We have Mrs Gandhi who is one of the most outstanding persons not only in India but internationally. There is not another person in the Congress party or in the opposition who is a patch on her. So if you look for a number two man, you unfortunately

I am not a politician, I dislike politics. I' admire politicians well, some of them. start on a very low level. So the wrong people come (to power) or some people go wrong once power gets into their hands. And unless they are tried it is very difficult to judge.

Q: You say there is no one who is a patch on her. What is your opinion of

Rajiv Gandhi?

A: Rajiv Gandhi has the material for being a leader, but it will take time. He came into politics only one-and-a-half years ago.

Q: What about Maneka Gandhi?
A: Maneka Gandhi has shown no

political acumen yet So let us see.
Q: Do you think Rajiv Gandhi has shown more acumen than her?

A: I definitely think so.

Q: What is your opinion of Indian politicians and the state of politics in the country today?

A: I am really the wrong person to comment. Somehow the media in India thinks that I have something to

do with politics.
Q: But if you think Mrs Gandhi is the right leader, you must have some

A: I am not a politician, I dislike politics. I admire politicians—well some of them. I do meet politicians and I do not see the same acumen in them, the same desire to do things for the country and the same gusto that I see in Mrs Gandhi.

Q. Talking about Mrs Gandhi, how did you meet her and how do you manage to maintain a very rare friendship with her, as she is in India

and you are in London?

A: It is not a friendship. It is more of admiration. As a child I was a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi and the Nehru family. On account of the freedom movement, my family named me Swraj because of the freedom movement. Swraj was the Congress Party's slogan. Then something very personal happened. I came to this country in 1966 when I brought my daughter here for treatment. She was suffering from leukaemia. We wanted our other children to visit her. We knew that they would never see this girl again as it was a losing battle but the government of India rules did not permit their coming, as at that time you could not even buy a ticket without the government of India's permission. My breaking my head did not produce any results. So I wrote a letter to Mrs Gandhi. I wrote to her as a Prime Minister and as a mother and sure enough in a week's time the government of India machinery moved and these children got permission to come. I thought that was a great act of a human being. It was admiration at first sight.

My daughter died and I decided to quit work altogether. That was why I stayed on in this country. After about a year and a half I started work and in 1971 when the Bangladesh war started I found that the media in the West was trying to criticise her actions in Bangladesh, which was absolutely wrong. So partly out of nationalism and partly due to the debt I owed Mrs Gandhi I thought I must respond and stand up to see that her position was clarified. I wrote letters to editors, to members of Parliament and heads of states, clarifying that she is right... I met her subsequently. But this is how it started.

Q: Coming back to the present controversy, why do you think it started? Why do you think there has been, as you say, a smear campaign

against you?

A: I do not want to react to smear campaigns but to what is factual. The facts are that the government of India decided last year on a policy—that because of their foreign exchange position and the need to earn it they would invite Indians living abroad to invest in India. A lot of ministers and civil servants from India came here and there were a lot of discussions none of which I aftended.

The federations and various chambers of commerce in India have themselves been trying to persuade the Indian government to liberalise policy, in this respect. I have been also told by various people: look why don't you invest in India? You must also respond to the call. I was trying to respond to a spirit of nationalism, and I bought some shares of some companies to act more as a catalyst for other Indians to join in.

O: Do you think it was necessary for hell to break loose?

A: It would have broken loose. The question was not whether Swraj Paul bought shares or some other overseas Indian bought shares. The question is: Here you sit on vast amounts of assets with very little money of your own and nobody to question it and you find that somebody is likely to come who will question you. The best way to safeguard interests is to cry wolf and try to kill the situation. In their position I would do the same...

Q: You would, if anyone tried to take over Caparo for instance...

A: I am saying what I would do in India. I would not do it here. The reason being that you cannot run companies in UK in the fashion these companies are being run in India. Here the laws are very different. The stock exchange requirements are very different. You cannot work with the public or the shareholders' funds as if they belong to you. The directors here must look after the interests of the shareholders, not just their own shares. I will give you an example: one of the company chairmen made a statement that he would buy his companies, shares at any price in India.

Q: The chairman you are referring to is...

A: Mr Nanda of Escorts. The Bharat Ram family has bought some shares too. You cannot do that in this country. You cannot buy shares without first advising the shareholder.

I will give you another example. There is a company we made a bid for on 12 April—the Barton group. Sometime back, after discussions we came to the conclusion that the company was worth ten and a half million pounds instead of the eight million we had bid for. We immediately had to make a statement in the press that the price per share would be 42½ p instead of 33 p which we initially bid for. In the Indian system I could have gone straight to the market and grabbed the shares for 35 p and made a profit of $7\frac{1}{2}$ p. We cannot do that here. No shareholder can be cheated just because I have more information about the company.

Q: But if you were in India and in Dr Bharat Ram's or Mr Nanda's posi-

tion, what would you do?

A: I would certainly defend that bid and say that with our performance the shareholders would be better off staying with us. I would certainly not call the bidder all sorts of names. You don't do a business deal by running to the Prime Minister or the finance minister saying that such people should be stopped. A shareholder's company must be treated as one for the shareholder and no shareholder should be treated with contempt.

Q: Do you think that is happening now...that you are being treated with

contempt...

A: I am a shareholder today. Why should they say all that?

Q: What do you propose doing

A: I am a very strong believer that a person is judged by his own actions. This is the Hindu philosophy and this is what I have found in my life running my business.

Q: You have acquired almost the same amount of shares the Bharat

Ram family have in DCM.

A: (Laughs.) That is what I am told. Q: Well By being in London how

do you propose to either question the management or look after the interests of your shares in India?

A: What I would like to ensure is that the chairmen, the people on the board, etc., are not my nominees and not nominees of anybody, but are people who have the status and who are capable of looking after the interests of the shareholder.

Q. Do you think this is the present practice in Indian companies?

A: I am afraid this is not happening. The reaction which my buying of shares has triggered off shows that this is not happening. Otherwise there is no reason whatsoever for any of them, for the federation or the chamber of commerce to get excited and run to the Prime Minister. Were they capable of looking after the shareholders, they would have treated me like any other shareholder.

Q: Has any of these industrial.

ists—J. R. D. Tata, Mr Nanda, Mr K. N. Modi, etc.—approached you directly and tried to bring pressure on you?

A: No. That would have been the most sensible thing to do. If I were the chairman and somebody was buying the shares I would immediately write to the shareholder

welcoming him...

Q: But you have the reputation of gobbling up companies...In the last five months you have acquired control of about four or five companies in the UK, so are not their fears justified?

A: Yes. I have this reputation, but the companies we have taken over-...the management and the shareholders have appreciated our coming in.

Q: Perhaps. But don't you think the fears Dr Bharat Ram has or Mr H. P. Nanda has that you might take

over their company...

A: But why should th

A: But why should they think it is their company. The whole concept is wrong in a public limited company. The company belongs to the shareholder.

Q: But it was they who built it up. They had to go public to raise funds

for expansion projects, etc...

A: Why should they not expect the company to be taken over. It would be imprudent on their part. How can you hold four per cent of the company and think you cannot be questioned?

Q: You have put in around one million dollars..

A: That is what I started with.

Q: It has been said that it is money

dubiously acquired...

A: It is nonsense and a ridiculous campaign has been made of it. Only people who are stupid make these allegations. My balance sheets are open to public examination anytime. Let them then show me their performance.

Q: Do you think they will be equally willing to show their balance

sheets?

A: I hope so. It should be so.

Q: It has also been said that you have used your political connections

here to advantage?

A: I have never gone to politicians to discuss business. I never mix business with politics. I think business should be run as a business. That is my field and that is what I enjoy. And I wish and hope people in India do not mix business with politics as that is a dangerous game.

Q: You feel that is happening now?
A: It is happening now. Otherwise

why should they (the businessmen) go to the Prime Minister and the finance minister.

Q: Why did you suddenly decide to

invest in India?

The second second second second

A: I invest in the United States. I invest in Japan. I have a company in Canada. It (investing in India) was an emotional gesture. I never thought the management was so weak. It was a revelation.

Q: But according to businessmen here you are not capable of making this sort of an emotional gesture. Do you think businessmen can afford financial decisions purely on emotional grounds?

A: It was an emotional decision up to one million dollars. That was more to act like a catalyst. But subsequently the decision was made to have a voice in these companies so we have now put in much larger sums.

Q: How much?

A: About ten times the original amount. That certainly was not an emotional decision. It is wrong to think that people who wish to be successful in business have to be hard or non-emotional. I am rightly or wrongly a very emotional man.

Q: In financial matters?

A: One million dollars is not a large sum in financial terms and in the context of what we are talking it is peanuts.

Q: You say you are acting as a catalyst? Has that happened? Have others followed you in your wake?

A: I said I was hoping to act as a catalyst. I think people from various parts of the world have bought shares.

Q: What do you feel about nonresident investment in India?

A: I think the country should make the market open for Indians outside to invest because that is how the whole stock market progresses and the whole economy progresses. Now whether I take control of these companies or not the fact is that they will wake up.

Q: What do you feel about the recent provisions of the government to encourage such investment?

A: I have not studied them.

Q: But you have invested following these proposals?

A: I saw that the government was allowing overseas Indians to invest money. I put in money too.

Q: Why did you choose these two companies?

A: Because they were in Delhi. O: Why Delhi?

A: Because Delhi and Calcutta are

on my beat (Laughs).

Q: Don't you think that the government provisions have given nonresident Indians an unfair advantage? The tax concessions, the income-tax and surcharge is 22.5 per cent against 28 per cent—that is the lowest tax slab in India. There are exemptions from wealth tax, gift tax, capital gains tax, etc., provided the gains are reinvested in specified assets.

A: This is the wool Indian industrialists are throwing to cover the eyes of the Indian government to try and change the provision. If I invest in the United States I pay less tax than what I will have to pay in India. The same is true of Japan despite these so-called concessions. What they are forgetting is that after I pay this tax in India this money has to come to me here in England and I

From rags to riches



(I to r) Surinder Paul, Stya Paul and Swraj Paul: all in the family

hen Payare Lal, son of Amin-V chand Paul, set up a small factory to manufacture metal buckets and tubs in Jullunder in 1910, his sights were not set on anything big. He was earning amodest'livelihood but never did his business look like a potential money spinner. Then came partition and Payare Lal took a decision that was to catapult him across the border that divides big business from the petty. He shifted a major chunk of his business to Calcutta in 1953 and soon started trading in iron and steel: Aminchand Payare Lal (Apeejay) Private Ltd was thus born From then onwards, the Pauls have never had to look back-at least as far as business was concerned. Today, the Apeejay group has an estimated turnover of Rs 90 crores, if not more.

The reason for the unprecedented success of the Paul brothers is the ability to foresee market potential. As Mr Jit Paul once remarked: "I have always believed in buying when the market is depressed." He has plans for a massive Rs 162-crore expansion for his shipping firm at a time when the shipping industry is facing rough seas. But, for Jit Paul, this is only a passing phase and he can see light at the end of the tunnel. Said he: "I firmly believe that the shipping industry has an excellent long term future. Intuition one might say, more than logical reasoning."

The group's expansion plans are as impressive as its past. It includes a 35-crore caustic soda plant in Andhra Pradesh, with technical col-

laboration from Asahi chemicals of Japan. The group holds the license to manufacture 'mother' polyster fibre at Indore. MP. Surrendra Overseas' plans include the acquistion of seven new vessels by May 1985, including six modern dry bulk carriers which burn only an average of 31 tonnes of fuel a day A 75,000 tonne, Rs 27-crore ship Panamax has already been ordered from the Cochin shipyard. These seven vessels will swell the carrying capacity of the company from 1.47 lakh tonnes to 2.62 lak'r tonnes.

The group has many tirsts to its credit, especially in shipping. An Apeejay vessel was the first Indian ship to enter the St Lawrence seaway (USA/Canada) in 1960. It was one of the first Indian shipping companies to purchase a vessel on a 'pay-as-you-earn' basis. Another Apeejay vessel had the distinction to be the first Indian ship to touch a Chinese port after a 15 year gap.

The Apeejay group has diversified and has entered besides shipping (Surrendra Overseas Ltd), into pharmaceuticals (Martin and Harris Pvt Ltd and Walter Bushnell Pvt Ltd), tea (Empire Plantation India Ltd Singlo India Tea Ltd and Assam Frontiers) and hotels. They are three brothers, Stya (64), Jit (59), Swraj Paul (51), and Surrender (46). And like most Indian business houses, the Apeejay enterprises too are controlled and managed by the family.

Binoo John



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have to pay the British tax which is as high as the one in India. There are

no special concessions.

Q: The Federation of Indian Merchants here and the Forum for Overseas Indians say that non-resident Indian investment should be geared to revitalise sick units, bring in new technology, start new industries, etc.

A: It is a load of rubbish.

Q: Why?

A: Where do the overseas Indians have any new technology? The whole talk of encouraging non-resident investment was because they used to go to the overseas Indians and say, please invest this money let us use your name and we will give you a fee for using it. This is the dubious money they were talking of. They wanted to do it themselves, but when someone has come and taken advantage of the rules using his own money they do not like it.

Q: But new technology could come in as non-resident Indians do have

access...

A: How many non-resident Indians have any industries anywhere in the world?

Q: The Lalwani family, the Chanderias...

A: Where are they in high tech-

nology?

A: What is electronics? To sell radios is not electronics. High technology should not be confused with VCRs. I do not know of even one Indian who has any idea of high technology. It is a very specialised subject. Putting a radio together or buying second-hand plants and setting them up in India is being called high technology. I think it is, a disgrace to India.

O. So, the measures to attract non-resident Indian investment will only lead to the purchase of shares in existing companies?

A: I think if the so-called management is so wonderful they should take their profits and set up new industries because they can borrow huge sums of money locally. They will have the capital in their hands as the share prices go up. That is what they owe to the country as with their specialised knowledge they can build more industries.

Q: What has the contribution of the Indian industrialists so far been to the country's economic develop-

ment?

A: I was told that the companies are beautifully managed, etc. Yesterday I was doing an analysis of two companies: DCM and Escorts. I was surprised to see some figures. DCM gives a return of 10 per cent on the capital. The interests charged by the banks in India is 19 per cent. Now, do you consider this a good return on capital employed? Escorts earns 17 per cent which is also below the interest rates charged by the banks. We judge performance by looking at the return on capital employed: the basic principle being that the return

Indian industrialists are used to holding shares in benami. We cannot hold benami shares in England.

on capital employed should be higher than the bank's lending rate otherwise there is no point in having any management in the companies.

The dividends are also not talked about quite correctly. They talk of dividend on the basis of the par value of the share. That is the historical value. They say they pay 20 per cent dividend when they pay two rupees as they are calculating on the ten-rupee value. So, when the share value is Rs 60 that amounts to only a 3.3 per cent dividend. Do you call this a good yield for a company? DCM says we pay 15 per cent dividend, i.e. 15 per cent on par value. On market value it is 5.3 per cent dividend. Does the management need a pat on the back for that?

Q: They have been through a bad

recessionary year.

A: Why should the yield be less than the interest rate? I agree there has been a recession. But I am referring to 1980, a year which is supposed to have been a good year for India.

Q: How do you propose to improve

their yield?

A: I would like to see a better return on the capital employed. A company must earn at least 25 to 50 per cent more than the interest prevailing. I will certainly make a noise now and ask them why this does not happen.

Q: Don't you think that nonresident Indians could now be used as a front for others. Perhaps, other business houses abroad will funnel their money into India and acquire control over the country's economy.

A: What is the point in differentiating between non-resident Indians with Indian passport holders and those of Indian origin holding nationality of other countries as the Indian industrialists have done. Do you think people outside are less nationalistic? People abroad are far more Indian and far more loyal to India than some of the people living in India. The very same industrial class making such remarks is more disloyal than the poor man I know in

These are the people (the Indian industrialists) who deride India, who complain that the country is restrictive.

India. These are the people who deride India, who complain that the country is restrictive and that the government should be liberal, etc.

Regarding foreign FERA companies coming back, it is the Indian industrialist who has always taken the line of supporting FERA companies much more than I have ever done or am likely to do. They are so collaboration-minded...they think they can then sell their shares better. They have an inferiority complex vis-a-vis a foreign name. Ninety-nine per cent of the Indian industries do not need foreign collaborations but our Indians love to have that.

What should be done is to check on people who are holding shares. Indian industrialists are used to holding shares in benami. We cannot hold benami shares in England. Perhaps, they are not used to the English law or of working so honestly. All I can say is that the shares I own belong to me. They have been bought with my money and it is in the balance sheet.

Q: Do you plan now to return to

India?

A: No. I love India. But I don't have to go back there. I can run my companies from here without visiting them for a year.

Q: How do you react to the suggestions made by Indian industrialists to considerably amend the proposals so as to limit such investment to a maximum of two per cent, with a permissible relaxation when the concerned company needs the funds for

advanced technology?

A: This suggestion is typical of the feudal system they operate in. They want to be like Moghuls. The country can never progress if this is so. I agree with the proposal that the shares be registered and that the identity of the shareholder be known so that this whole business of benami shareholding is ended in India.

Q: Do you think these provisions will be amended after discussions in

Parliament?

A: The government and Parliament are perfectly capable of thinking wisely. It is the industrialists who cannot do the same. Their suggestions show that they could not care less for the shareholders. What I do hope is that irrespective of what I hold and whether measures are introduced to stop non-resident Indian investment, the government, Parliament and the press make sure that no management will treat one shareholder differently from another and that the managements do not look upon such companies as their private empires. That is a lesson I hope that is learnt from all this controversy. It is like political awareness. Once awareness comes, people ask questions. It is like a revolution. What I have sowed are the seeds of a revolution. If I succeed in introducing democracy to the corporate sector I would have made the greatest contribution to my motherland...accidentally...

MAHARASHTRA

The humiliation of Vasantdada Patil

The high command reduces an astute politician to a mere puppet

Bombay: There is a popular Marathi saying which vividly portrays the political scene in Maharashtra today, and that is kombade zunjavane (cocks made to fight for crumbs). The ruling clique at 1, Safdarjang Road has, for a long time, been making the ambitious politicians in this state fight among themselves so that they may always remain weak.

Today, Mr Vasantdada Patil who was potentially probably the strongest Congress(I) chief minister in the country, and the one with the most reputed background of organisational and political experience, has been reduced to a pliable puppet by the high command. That Dada has been badly humiliated and has become a figure of fun, was evidenced in a cartoon in a Marathi daily. The cartoon showed him first carrying a banner with the legend Rajinama (resignation). Then Mrs Gandhi admonishes him and he tears the banner hiding one half. The revealed half now reads: Raji (I agree).

After the recent happenings, in Maharashtra, many questions surface. Why did Dada initially take a position of bravado saying that he would resign if Prof. S.M.I. Aseer was made the MPCC(I) president, and then why did he retract in such humiliation? Was he not aware of the machinations of New Delhi, having been the AICC(I) general secretary for so long? Was it only his greed for power which muddled his thinking? As an astute politician—and a Maratha at that—who himself has

successfully played one section of people against another, could he not see through the game the high command was playing? Dada is reported to have told some of his confidants that it was Rajiv Gandhi who had told him to go as chief minister of Maharashtra. He said that had Mrs Gandhi told him so, then there could have been some doubt, but when Rajiv Gandhi told him, then it was definite.

What follows is a step-by-step account of how Dada has been cut to size over the last few months:

15 January: Union minister for sports, Mr Buta Singh and union minister for energy and petroleum, Mr Shiv Shankar, were sent to Bombay to try and break the unity of the four rival groups that had come together to oust Mr Babasaheb Bhosale. They asked every legislator who came singly or in groups who they wanted as leader, and all of them said, 'First oust Bhosale then we will decide on a leader.'

21 January: Speculation was rampant about the report given to the high command by the two observers. Bhosale, sensing that he was to be ousted, sent his sister-in-law, Nirmala Thokal, to Delhi saying that if he had to go then he would support either Pratibha Patil or S. B. Chavan, the union minister for planning. Balasaheb Pawar and Vital Rao Gadgil, MP, met Pranab Mukherjee and got the impression that the centre would select a chief minister from among the dissidents. Pawar got

ambitious and decided that as the leading dissident, he could be in the running. A story to this effect was leaked among legislators, although Pawar himself denied the story

22 January: Rajiv Gandhi called on Mr S. B. Chavan, creating reverberations that reached Bombay. Speculation ran wild about S. B. Chavan as the centre's choice.

23 January: S. B. Chavan arrived in Bombay by the Frontier Mail after a tour of his constituency. He found an icy reception awaiting him and dissidents released a warning that they would not tolerate S. B. Chavan being foisted on them. Bhosale's camp was automatically isolated because they were supporting S. B. Chavan.

25 January: Dissidents were still in suspense as they had not decided on a single name and every group kept biting the bait of any name thrown out by the high command in order to create confusion in their ranks.

28 January: The Congress working president, Mr Kamlapati Tripathi for the first time said that Mr Bhosale would go and that he was sending two observers to Bombay to arrange for the election of a successor. He also made it clear that the Legislature Party would be left totally free to elect their leader. He went to the extent of saying that the party's style of functioning over the last three years was responsible for the southern debacle.

29 January: Y. J. Mohite, MP and former minister in Maharashtra, was given the idea by Pranab Mukherjee that he should contest the chief ministership. He suddenly descended on Bombay saying that he would not allow Mr Vasantdada Patil to be elected unopposed. Also on this day, Mr Ramrao Adik, through a legislator hotelier, Mr O. P. Behl, went to meet Mr Vasantdada Patil in order to work out a compromise. The deal was that Mr Adik would not contest, provided Dada made him the deputy chief minister. Dada agreed.

31 January: Adik was pulled up by his mentor in Delhi, Mr R. K. Dhawan, and was told not to make any compromise with Dada and to contest the post. Meanwhile, Bhosale, not wishing to let things bypass him, called up Mr Fotedar in the Prime Minster's clique and asked whom they should support. Fotedar reportedly told him to support Pra-

Aseer (left) and Vasantdada: political pawns?





tibha Patil. When he called the next day to confirm, he was told he could support Mr S. B. Chavan. And so, by now, there were Mr Vasantdada Patil, Mr Ramrao Adik, Mr A. R. Antulay, Mr S. B. Chavan, Mrs Pratibha Patil and Balasaheb Pawar in the running for Maharashtra's chief ministership.

Around noon on this day, Dada began to put up a shamiana at the residence of his wife, Mrs Shalinitai Patil, who was a minister in Mr Bhosale's cabinet. Indications almost confirmed that the centre had decided on Dada, but they did not want to announce it. Since the legislators had demanded an election, they would be given one, and in the bargain the high command would know exactly how much support which candidate got. The process of electing a leader started at 3 pm and even till then the legislators were not told that they should not vote for Mr Antulay. Messrs Buta Singh and Shiv Shankar, however, told the press that Mr Antulay was not eligible for contesting.

Just before midnight, while observers were counting the votes, Shiv Shankar is alleged to have indicated to Mr Adik that he was winning. Adik passed on this message to his cronies waiting outside and there was a sudden burst of crackers (brought along by his wife and daughter), in the porch of the

Vidhan Sabha.

I February: At one, late in the night, Mr Vasantdada Patil was declared elected the chief minister because although he did not get the requisite majority, he secured more votes than Mr Adik. Dada was indirectly told that it was Delhi which made him CM and not the legislators. Mr Patil, when asked whether Adik would be made the deputy chief minister, said "No" because he specifically broke an understanding.

2 February: Dada was sworn in at the

Raj Bhavan.

3 February: He flew to New Delhi with his list of ministers and said that his cabinet would be sworn in on the fifth or sixth.

4 February: Unable to see the Prime Minister, Dada waited with his list. Mr Adık and several others were also in Delhi, lobbying for themselves and their groups.

5 February: Vasantdada told the press that he favoured having a

deputy chief minister.

6 February: The Congress(I) swept the Delhi polls. Mrs Gandhi having regained her old confidence which had taken a knocking after the Andhra and Karnataka debacles, decided to teach Dada a lesson. She gave Mr Adik an appointment before Dada. She finalised the list with Adik. She then called Dada with his list and a final list was given to Adik who was asked to give it to Dada. The latter's list had been slashed while most of Adik's names were retained. One of the names that

Dada vehemently opposed was that of Prof. Aseer, as he wanted to include his own nominee, Mr Shankarrao Kolhe, from Nagar district. The final list was announced from Delhi. 7 February; The ministers were sworn in. Adik was made deputy chief minister. A literal parallel government was run by Mr Adik, who had the portfolio of industry and urban development. All his nominees had important portfolios. Through March the search began for an MPCC(I) president, to replace Mr Gulabrao Patil. Adik's group suggested Prof. Aseer. The compulsions of the 1985 elections had made the high command settle for Dada as CM since Mr Adik had never won an election in his life and so would not be able to organise a successful campaign. But they did not want Dada to strengthen and consolidate his position as Mr Antulay had done.

In early April, the high command announced Prof. Aseer's name as MPCC(I) president and Dada immediately threatened to resign, so in three hours they retracted the name. The Assembly was in session and they decided to take a decision after that. Dada kept up the refrain of his

threat.

30 April: The high command announced Prof. Aseer's name as MPCC(I) president. Dada accepted it. His wife resigned her Assembly seat at Sangli to pave the way for Dada to contest.

What does the future hold for Vasantdada? The high command knows that Dada is suitably humiliated. They also know that the admi-

nistration will come to a standstill if his foes play up his humiliation. Rajiv Gandhi is still fully backing Dada. According to sources close to 1, Safdarjang Road, they had to emasculate Dada because he tried to defy the high command with his threat of resignation. Had they finally chosen anyone other than Prof. Aseer, then every other chief minister would have thought he could get away with defying the high command. But now with the lesson taught, they have to refurbish Dada's strongman image. So there is a strong possibility that they will give him a free hand in expanding his cabinet.

According to a reliable source, Vasantdada may be allowed to drop seven or eight ministers from his cabinet and most of them belong to the Ramrao Adik group. The ugly scenes between the two ministers of state, Mr Satish Pednekar and Mrs Parvati Malgonda (both of them are Mr Adik's nominees) over a flat, which have now become a public scandal, have given Dada an upper hand and he could well get rid of them. Other names being mentioned are those of Arun Divekar, the young minister for sports who already has many a black mark against his name for unpalatable behaviour; Mr Ganesh Dudhgaokar, who was a flop during the Assembly session; Mrs Yashodhra Bajaj, who is most uneffective and Mr Abdul Azeem, against whom there are corruption charges.

Olga Tellis

OPPOSITION CONCLAVE

A show of strength and unity

Hyderabad: The Telugu Desam's annual convention is to be held in the industrial town of Vijayawada over three days from 26 May onwards. Apart from the elections to

NTR: being wooed



the state's party leadership, the convention will also, in effect, be a massive publicity campaign for chief minister N.T. Rama Rao at the

national level.

While it has been planned that the first two days will be taken up in the party elections and in constituting a formal party organisation (at the moment there are no office-bearers except NTR as the party president). the last day of the convention is scheduled for a meeting of the national and regional opposition party leaders. Invitations have already been sent to the chief ministers of the six non-Congress(I) states as well as the leaders of all the opposition parties. NTR recently told a team of visiting political journalists from Dethi that he wanted to hold an opposition conclave to discuss issues of national interests. NTR's recent trips to the capital and the visits of leaders like Dr Faroog Abdullah, H.N.

Bahuguna and others have indicated the importance he can command a

A senior minister of NTR's cabinet told Sunday that an emissary from the Congress(I) high command had already proposed to the Telugu Desam, a 50 per cent seat adjustment in the event of a mid-term parliamentary poll. From the position of his unshakeable strength, NTR reportedly turned down the proposal. With the 42 MPs that Andhra Pradesh elects to the Parliament, the leaders of other opposition parties have also called on NTR. He was the chief guest at Babu Jagjivan Ram's birthday celebrations, which were presided over by Chaudhury Charan Singh in Delhi. Fulsome compliments were exchanged by the three leaders here, it is reported.

The first conclave of all non-Congress(I) political parties, which will be held on 28 May, will coincide

with NTR's birthday. A birthday rally that is being organised as a finale 'to the convention, by the Telugu Yuvata (the party's youth wing), with a participation of about two million people, is expected to be a show of the significant strength and support that the chief minister has. Although it is unlikely that there will be any unity moves made during these three days, the opposition leaders will address the public meetings. One of the major outcomes of this convention is expected to be the successful wooing of NTR by the opposition parties, in readiness for parliamentary elections.

One of the main organisers of this conclave is P Upendra. The success of the convention, it is said, will also add enormously to the rapidly rising influence that he is gaining within the party. So far, NTR's important political adviser was furance minis-

ter Nadendla Bhaskar Rao. But now, Upendra seems to be emerging as a shrewd political strategist. Although his experience in election politics is limited (he was the sole Telugu Desam candidate who lost in the February byelection from a Hyderabad constituency), his contacts with the opposition leaders have helped in formulating the plans for this convention. (Upendra had been the special assistant to Mr Madhu Dandavate when the latter was minister for railways during the Janata rule.) The stage thus seems to be absolutely set for what is likely to be one of the greatest such shows. Minor internal bickerings-which are inevitable during the pre-party election days have been ignored and the Telugu Desam is gearing up to become the "fi**rst p**arty ever to hold such a conclave."

Shubha Singh

Mrs Gandhi turns a cold shoulder







S. C. Mathur (lett): Mrs Gandhi and Pahadia: deliberate partiality

Jaipur: Mrs Gandhi's one-day visit to Rajasthan late last month has lent further credence to the rumours that all is not well with chief minister Shiv Charan Mathur Mrs Gandhi had come to Rajasthan, ostensibly to assess for herself the extent of the drought in the state, to see the progress of the Rajasthan canal and to address a meeting of scheduled castes and tribes

She arrived in an IAF plane at Jodhpur to begin her tout of the desert belt. She was accompanied by Mrs Rajendra Kumari Bajpai, AICC(I) general secretary in charge of Rajasthan affairs, who had been to the state capital earlier to assess the dissension in the legislature party. After just a brief halt at Jodhpur airport, the Prime Minister left for Khanodi village in a helicopter for an on-the-spot study of relief operations. It was from this moment that the public humiliation of the chief minister at the hands of Mrs Indira Gandhi began.

In her typical style, the PM took the former chief minister, Mr Jagannath Pahadia in her own helicopter and asked Mr Shiv Charan Mathur to follow in another one Since that time

onwards Mr Pahadia travelled with the PM and Mr Mathur followed them. At Kanhodi, the stage-managed show of the state government turned out to be a flop. All precautions to keep Mrs Gandhi away from the realities proved abortive when she herself started talking to the womenfolk employed on the famine relief work. She had some difficulty with the language and at this stage. CM Mathur and his trusted lieutenant, health minister Khet Singh Rathore, started acting as interpreters. But the Prime Minister was not happy with this and she asked Mrs Bajpai to talk to the labour and find out the truth. The women labourers told Mrs Bajpai in very clear terms that people were dying of hunger in their villages. This immediately demolished the state government's claim that there had been no starvation deaths.

However, greater embarrassment was in store for Mr Mathur. At Raisingh Nagar, where the Prime Minister was to address a conference of scheduled castes and tribes, only four chairs had been provided on the rostrum. These were marked for the Prime Minister, Mr Buta Singh, Mrs

Bajpai and CM Mathur. But when the programme started, Mrs Gandhi noticed Mr Nawal Kishore Sharma, the Rajasthan PCC(I) chief and Jagannath Pahadia in the audience. She immediately instructed her security officer to arrange for two more chairs and call Mr Sharma and Mr Pahadia to the dais. Moreover, she herself struck off two names from the list of speakers-including that of Dularam, minister for social welfare and a staunch supporter of the CM. Instead, she put down the names of Jagannath Pahadia and Nawal Kishore Sharma.

For Mr Mathur, the relief obtained when she asked him to accompany her in the same plane to Delhi, proved to be very short-lived. In the capital, Mr Mathur waited for two days in vain, trying to get an appointment with the Prime Minister. Ultimately, he returned to the state without meeting her. Thus, his plan to reshuffle the cabinet by dropping some of the dissident ministers and inducting some of his supporters, was perforce, put into cold storage.

Milap Chand Dandia

Plotting for allotments

Chandigarh: Allotment of commercial plots in a centrally located area here, to so-called wholesale cloth merchants, has created a lot of controversy. Simultaneously, under another scheme, the Chandigarh Housing Board has allotted large, high income group flats to senior "retired and retiring officials." The beneficiaries for these include both the home secretary and the finance secretary of the Chandigarh administration. (The finance secretary also happens to be the chairman of the Board.)

The premium on each commercial plot is in the region of about Rs 20 lakhs, and on a flat about Rs two lakhs. The commercial plots which have been allotted in order to help the setting up of wholesale cloth business in the city, have gone to a selected, lucky few. The allotments reveal that there are some firms which have been given more plots. Moreover.some firms like Ramsaran Inderpal Batra, Chhabra Textile Agency, Sachdev Textiles, Chhabra Agency and Chandigarh Wholesale Cloth Merchants Association, already operating in the city have been allotted plots at a nominal reserve price.

This allotment scheme was mooted a few years ago when Mr T.N. Chaturvedi was the chief commissioner. Mr Chaturvedi, who is now the union home secretary, had then rejected the proposal on the grounds that if the grain market, vegetable market and iron market could come up on auctioned land, then why could the wholesale cloth merchants' market not do so as well. However, those with vested interests did not let the matter rest there. The uncertain future of this city provided the neces-

sary opportunity and the scheme was

revived. The man behind this was

Chandigarh's representative in the

Lok Sabha, Mr Jagannath Kaishal. The Janata Party chief in Chandigarh, Mr Harmohan, alleged that each prospective allottee was asked to part with substantial sum to be eligible for the scheme. The deals were never made public and even today the Chandigarh officials refuse to divulge any information regarding the allotment of commercial plots. The most intriguing part of the scandal is that these plots were being allotted at a reserve price whereas plots elsewhere were being auctioned, bringing the administration substantial sums of money. Besides, the practice of inviting ap-

The allotments of flats under the Housing Board, is even more intriguing. Initially, only those officials

plications and the criteria for allot-

ment, is also questionable.

drawing a salary of Rs 2.000 or more and those already retired or retiring between 1978 and 1983, were considered eligible. The demand survey made in February 1981 revealed that only a handful of officials had applied. The scheme was then altered to change the eligibility conditions. Earlier, only employees of Punjab, Harvana and Chandigarh were eligible. Now, employees of the central government, the university and other institutions were also included. The date of retirement too was extended two and a half years more either way, and now those retired or retiring between the years 1976 to 1986 were deemed eligible. This relaxation made two important IAS efficers now eligible.

The other condition, of having no plot or house in Chandigarh or in either of the satellite townships of Mohali and Panchkula, was retained but was not strictly enforced at the time of the allotments. In the hope that all these relaxations would make many high-ranking officials now eligible, the construction of as many as 141 flats was undertaken. It is not clear how the construction was started for these 141 flats under the self-financing scheme, when there were only 72 applicants.

Over the recent months, there has been strong objection from both the Punjab and Harvana governments, regarding the "squandering of costly land" to favourites and to those who can manipulate. Their plea to the centre to cancel all these allotments-including those made to the union territory employees—until the fate of Chandigarh is decided, has not been heeded yet. The Janata Party, the CPI and the BJP have already demanded the cancellation of the "deals" and have asked for a thorough probe to expose the guilty. Till the time of writing, however, the administration's only response was silence.

Satish Kumar

MADHYA PRADESH

Bhilai's fight against the anti-socials

Raipur: On the evening of 6 April, two-and-a-half-year-old Rinkoo, the son of an Hindustan Steel Corporation Limited (HSCL) engineer, Mr Narendra Singh, was found missing. Mr Sharma, along with a few engineers, immediately rushed to the Bhilai police station, to report the case. A couple of days before that, some goondas had threatened Mr Narendra Singh and some other HSCL engineers with dire consequences, since they had beaten up an anti-social element who had been teasing a girl in their locality. Because of this threat, Mr Sharma and the others were somewhat worried.

The police recorded the FIR only when the higher officials requested them to do so. However, the town inspector of police told the engineers that he would look into their complaint only after another four hours, when he would move out on his routine rounds. The next day, Rinkoo's body was found in a tank. And since then, the HSCL engineers have been agitating. They paralysed work in the Bhilai unit of the HSCL for about a week and on 12 April, organised a total Bhilai bandh, including the closure of the offices of the Bhilai Steel Plant and all other private and public undertakings in Bhilai. A delegation of the HSCL engineers also went to Bhopal and met the chief minister, Mr Arjun Singh, who directed CID investigation on

the case. The CM also ordered the suspension of the town inspector and nominated a three-member committee (comprising Congress-I MLAs) to investigate into the law and order situation in Bhilai and to find out the real facts about the Rinkoo murder. These three members were: Mr Laxmi Narayan Induriya, Mrs Rashmi Devi and Mr Baijnath Chandrakar.

Meanwhile, the HSCL Engineers Association, two Congress(I) MLAs, trade unions and several other sections have charged the district administration of Durg and the police with being hand in glove with the anti-secial elements of the steel city. They have also decided to take a delegation to New Delhi to acquaint the Frime Minister and the home minister with what they term as the goonda raj in Bhilai. They are also planning to agitate and stop work in all the HSCL units, not merely in the country but also in Libya. The decision to paralyse work here and abroad, was taken at a meeting that was held at Bhilai, of representatives of the HSCL Engineers Associations from all over India. The announcement was made by Mr Ramadhar Jha, general secretary of the HSCL Engineers Association.

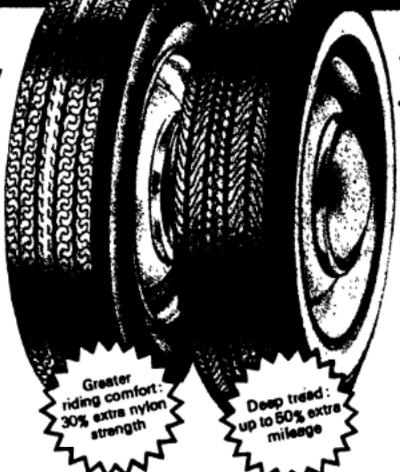
The three MLAs worked for several days in Bhilai and took the statements of over 300 persons. But soon, trouble started brewing. One of the committee members, Mr Induriva, is



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GOOD YEAR
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himself a very compoversial figure in MP's Congress(I) politics. He was once the general secretary of the PCC(I) but was suspended from the party for a while for convening a conference of Congress(I) MLAs to review the execution of the 20-point programme in MP, defying instructions from the general secretary of the AICC(1). However, last year he was readmitted into the party on a directive from the Prime Minister, Mrs Gandhi. Mr Induriya also happened to be a dissident leader and had, only a few months ago, alleged that the MLAs had no voice in the implementation of the 20-point programme as it was totally at the mercy of the bureaucrats in the state.

The bureaucrats in MP are thus dissatisfied with the appointment of these three MLAs to the fact-finding committee. These bureaucrats and the police bosses feel that if the chief

minister was keen on a genuing investigation, he should have appointed some top officials from the secretariat for the job. This appointment has been interpreted by this lobby as an adverse comment on the chief minister's partiality. The main grievance of the officials is that the committee was not appointed by the Congress(I)—in which case they would have treated it as a committee of a political party-but by the chief minister who directed the MLAs to submit the report to him. A high-ranking bureaucrat told SUNDAY that it might have been good for the CM to satisfy the ego of some of his party MLAs, but there is no provision for any such committee in the government procedures and rules.

Mr L. N. Induriya was not prepared to discuss the matter with this correspondent. However, it has been

All and a mark more than the other known that the collector of Durg, Mr. Swaroop Singh Porte, told the committee that his main obstacle in controlling the anti-social elements was that these persons had the political patronage of ministers, MLAs and other ruling party leaders. He made no secret of the fact that when he did take these anti-socials to task, he was extended no cooperation from the state capital and finally his actions were overruled by state bosses. He is also said to have mentioned some names, but Mr Induriya was not prepared to divulge them. He merely said, "I will give all the facts to the chief minister." Meanwhile, the bureaucrats are thinking of taking up the issue in their respective associations—the IAS Officials Association, the Deputy Collectors Association and the Policemen's Association.

M. V. Kher

International thriller to be filmed in India

Bombay: By all accounts, it was just sheer good luck that helped Salma Agha bag a prize role in the multimillion dollar British production Pawn to King Three. She was present at the right place at the right time and, as luck would be, there was someone important looking around for the right sort of girl to play a major role in an international thriller. In fact it was much later that Salma learnt that she had won over tough competition from some of the top names in Hollywood and Bombay.

According to one fairytale version, director Peter Hunt-better known for his handling of the Bond film On Her Majesty's Secret Service - spotted Salma in the first class section of an Air India flight when both were en route to London. Impressed by what he saw, Hunt is supposed to have put her through a screen test in London before offering her the part. Another version talks of Salma having bumped into John Walley of Evangrove Productions—the producers of the film during her stay in London. Impressed by her confidence and charm, Whalley put her through a series of photographic sessions and screen tests. This was followed by an interview with director Peter Hunt in Hollywood. She learnt about her selection when she met Mahmud Sipra, a shipping magnate who owns Evangrove as a subsidiary enterprise.

Salma, however, was unavailable for comment. Her associates confirm that Pawn to King Three was a lucky break that occurred because of her sudden trip to London. The trip, unfortunately, has turned into a running controversy for Salma and marred her relationship with B.R. Chopra who directed her first film, Nikaah.

Shashi Kapoor, who has a major role in the film, has neither read the script nor has any idea of what Pawn to King Three is all about. "Dad has been so busy of late that he has not



Shashi Kapoor (left) and Salma Agha: prize roles

even read the script. Mahmud Sipra is an old family friend and I guess that's the reason for his signing the film," said Shashi's son, Kunal Kapoor.

(Shashi is presently in Dubai.) A big-budget project, Pawn to King Three is based on the povel of the same name written by Sipra. In addition to Salma Agha and Shashi Kapoor, the film stars a long list of Hollywood celebrities headed by Omar Sharif. Among others in the cast are: Jane Seymour, Tracy Ward and Christopher Lee. Evangrove is reportedly still negotiating with several top names on both sides of the Atlantic for the few roles still to be cast. (Interestingly, Evangrove has just completed Jigsaw Man, a spy thriller set in London and Moscow. This a story based on the life of the renowned double agent, Kim Philby, who defected to Russia.)

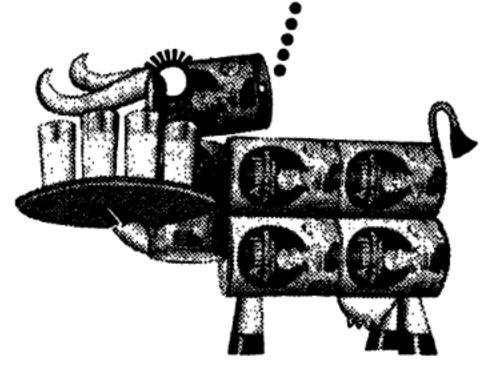
Expected to be shot extensively in



India and Pakistan, Evangrove hopes to commence location shooting sometime in September. A production team is presently scouting locations and completing negotiations with the two governments for filming in the subcontinent. Pawn to King Three is a story of immigrants. It is the story of Indians and Pakistanis who have been extremely successful and have made a tremendous impact in international finance centres like London, New York and Zurich. The plot revolves around the immigrants and deals with high finance, shipping, theft of nuclear technology, immigration and its problems and the intrigue and wheeling dealing in high places. Doubtlessly, this film too is going to generate as much excitement as the other foreign films that have been shot in India of late, have done.

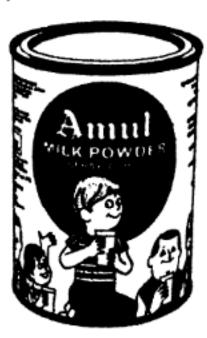
A Correspondent

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The difficult choice of an ally

Cochin: When the Congress(S) lost two of its stalwarts in Kerala, Mr A. K. Anthony and Mr Vyalar Ravi, to the Congress(I) fold 15 months back, no one could have thought that the party would be able to survive the shock of these defections. However, when the AICC(S) met in Cochin from 7 to 10 May, it was evident that the Kerala unit of the party, led by Mr P.C. Chacko, had not only regained a lot of its lost ground but had successfully kept a large section of the Congress(S) rank and file with itself while the top leaders had gone over to Mrs Gandhi.

Among the seven recognised national parties, the Congress(S) has the youngest president. Mr Sharad Pawar (42), is not only the party chief, but also the mainstay of the party in Maharashtra, where he has a tremendous mass base. The dilemma facing the party today is whether it should remain in its present form or it should join hands with other like-minded forces. The session of the AICC(S) was dominated by this debate.

The confusion prevailing among the opposition parties on the question of polarisation of forces for providing an alternative to the Congress(I) was best reflected in the Congress(S) session. The party debated at length, both during the session and in the working committee meeting which preceded it, whether to maintain its identity or merge with some other party. Two distinct trends seem to have emerged in the Congress(S). While officially it is going ahead with the concept of a pan-Congress unity by joining hands with Mr H. N. Bahuguna's Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) and Mr Ratubhai Adani's Rashtriya Congress in Gujarat, a powerful section of its leadership is keen to join hands with the Janata Party president, Mr Chandra Shekhar.

The working committee of the party had discussions on Mr Chandra Shekhar. Mr Dharam Vir Sinha and Mrs Ambika Soni wanted the party to compliment Mr Chandra Sekhar on his Bharat yatra. Mr Dharam Vir Sinha went to the extent of producing an alternate draft for the political resolution in order to include the references to Mr Chandra Sekhar in the main political resolution itself. But the CWC(S), after a heated discussion, in which, at one stage Mr Sinha even threatened to resign from the body, decided that a separate resolution should be passed hailing Mr Chandra Shekhar. The main opposition to Mr Sinha's move came from Mr D.K. Barooah, Mr Raj Bahadur and Mr K.P. Unnikrishhan. They felt that while greeting the president of another party, it was not proper to do so within the political resolution. Ultimately, it was decided that Mr Chandra Shekhar be greeted as an individual and not in his capacity as the president of the Janata Party, as the Bharat yatra was not a party programme.

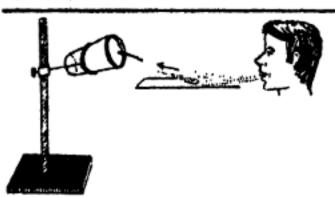
A massive rally on the evening of 8 May heralded the session. The DSP president, Mr Bahuguna, specially flew down from Delhi to address the rally. However, the presence of Mr Bahuguna evoked a mixed response. Even Mr Bahuguna did not seem to be happy at the outcome. He told this correspondent that while the process of unification of the former Congressmen had started, the path was long-winding. The session produced very exhaustive and politically well-drafted resolutions. But the question remained-whether this party, led by Mr Sharad Pawar, who has a mass base of his own in Maharashtra, could by itself provide any serious threat to the Congress(I). The leaders were clear in their minds that they could not achieve much by going it alone. But the choice of an ally was a problem which they could not surmount

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya.

Science for children

Produced by Vikram A. Sarabhai Community Science Centre and VIKSAT Ahmedabad

Glass and coin feat



Tilt a glass as shown in the diagram and place a coin (a ten paise coin would do quite well) about five cm away from it. Now ask your friend

pheric pressure. The coin is therefore lifted and gains momentum due to the air in motion and flies into the

Figure this out

dent problems.

A and B are two schemes of digits written in a triangular formation. Can you discover some pattern in

to put that coin in the glass without

touching it. If he cannot do it, you

can steal a march over him by blow-

ing over the coin. Almost at once the

phenomenon. When you blow over

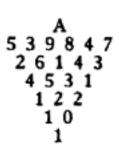
the coin, the air in the vicinity is set

in motion and the pressure there

drops as compared with the atmos-

Bernoulli's principle explains the

coin flies into the glass.



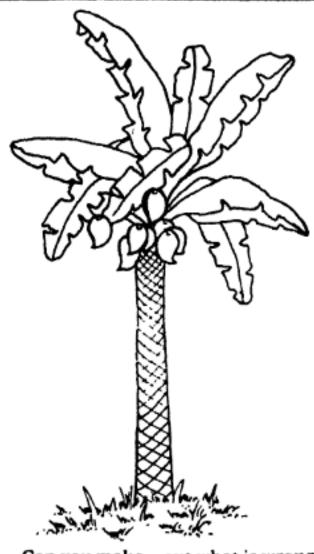
each of them? They are two indepen-

ANSWERS

ANSWERS

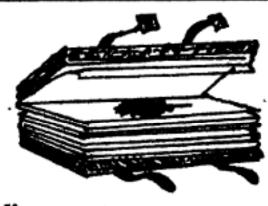
Alference of the two digits just above it. B: Each digit is the difference between the two digited numbers just above it and the nearest perfect square.

Spot what's wrong



Can you make out what is wrong with this picture?

Preserving leaves



If you want to preserve your leaf collection all you have to do is place the leaves between thick layers of absorbent cardboard or blotters. The entire stack can then be placed between two heavy, flat boards, bound

firmly and kept in a warm, dry place for about ten days. To help you identify different species of trees more easily, the preserved leaf can then be supplemented with a twig and a photograph of the tree to which it belongs.

Other ideas with leaves: you can display the leaves under an adhesive plastic cover or you can keep leaf impressions in printer's ink with a roller on a piece of glass, place the leaf on a blotter with its vein side up, ink it with a roller and turn the inked leaf on the page to be printed. Place a paper on the leaf and press firmly.

Do you know?

Almost always we find that the colder a thing is, the more rigid it becomes. It is only in solid matterwhich is the coldest—that there is rigidity and as a rule the colder a solid thing is, the more rigid it becomes. This can be seen in the case of iron. But when iron is heated, its molecules are thrown into greater motion and move farther apart as can be witnessed in the iron bar's expansion. If then the molecules are farther apart than they were previously and are moving about more, they cannot hold on to each other as closely as before. So, the iron bar which could not be bent when it was cold, readily bends.

SCIENCE PEOPLE

Arthur C. Clarke, author of the best selling science fiction, 2001: A Space Odyssey, has recently published a sequel to it. It's title: 2010: Odyssey Two. Clarke feels that a visit to earth by creatures from outer space could, if it ever took place, have a profound impact on our religion and philosophy.



Arthur C Clarke: Space Udyssey

Dr Christiaan Barnard, the South African surgeon who performed the world's first heart transplant 15 years ago, has just announced his retirement. The reason was that he was suffering from arthritis—a kind of bone disease that affects the joints. This has prevented him from carrying out further operations.

When Kenneth Wilson ran in a track meet as a 16-year old freshman at Harvard university 30 years ago, it was rumoured that the next race had to be delayed to allow him to finish. The classroom was a different story. Now he has become famous—as the winner of the Nobel prize for physics. He got the prize for his work in "critical phenomena," which occur when matter changes from one form to another (for example: when water evaporates).

Henry Jacob

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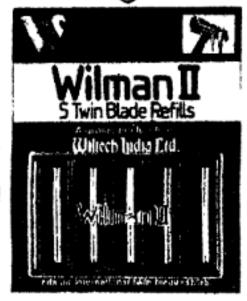
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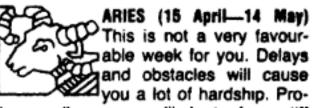


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Sunday week Beginning 22 May

By AMRITLAL



fessionally you are likely to face stiff competition from your colleagues. You are advised to exercise restraint in your dealings. Your health will also add to your miseries. But a letter you are likely to receive towards the end of the week will relieve you of most of your worries.

Good dates: 22, 23 and 24. Lucky numbers: 3, 6 and 8. Favourable direction: East.

TAURUS (15 May-14 June) Do not fritter away the opportunities that will come your way this week. You should be prepared to take up new challenges. Financially this is a good phase and there is a likelihood that you will gain property through inheritance. The domestic front will also remain peaceful: your near ones will be a source of joy and inspiration. This is also

a good week for love and marriage. Good dates: 26, 27 and 28. Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 7. Favourable direction: North-west.

GEMINI (15 June---14 July) This is not a good week for O businessmen. Do not take hasty decisions or embark Yon new projects. But this is

a favourable week for those employed in services. A promotion cannot be ruled out. For those in love, a word of advice: do not pay heed to rumours and avoid disputes with your beloved. Your health will worry you throughout the week.

Good dates: 23, 24 and 26. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 9. Favourable direction: North.

CANCER (15 July---14 August) This may be a week of mixed fortunes. You may have the opportunity of meeting more people, in-

cluding influential ones; so use them to your advantage. Your health may pose problems. For those in government service, promotions are in the offing. But you are advised not to get into disputes with your superiors.

Good dates: 25. 27 and 28.

Lucky numbers: 1, 7 and 8. Favourable direction: South-west.

LEO (15 August-14 September) This is a week of mixed fortunes. Initially you will a suffer set backs but these should not deter you from

taking important decisions. Do not hesitate to consult your elders particularly in matters pertaining to business. The second half of the week will be particularly favourable and hence you should make the most of it. Avoid socialising and push your ventures through.

Good dates: 22, 24 and 26. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 8. Favourable direction: South.

VIRGO (15 September—14 October) Success in all your ventures is a certainty this week. Friends and relatives J will prove to be particularly

helpful. You will also come in contact with eminent persons. Do not enter into unnecessary disputes with them for you may utilise their influence later. The financial front will remain bright but curb extravagance. This is also a good phase for negotiations.

Good dates: 23, 25 and 27. Lucky numbers: 2, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: North-east.



Z LIBRA (15 October—14 November) This week you may come in for severe criticism from your employers. Exercise restraint

in dealing with such a situation. But the domestic front will remain peaceful: your children or near ones will attain recognition. This phase is also good for businessmen—they should embark on new projects.

Good dates: 24, 26 and 28. Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 9 Favourable direction: West.



SCORPIO (15 November---14 December) This is a favour-Table week for businessmen. Professionals may have to undertake tours this week A good week for artists and

academics. A complex problem may beleaguer you but do not lose heart. A promotion is likely for those in government service. This is also a favourable week for marriage and negotiations.

Good dates: 22, 25 and 28. Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 6. Favourable direction: South-east.

SAGITTARIUS (15 December---14 January) This week may prove to be a difficult one. You may have to face certain trials and tribula-

tions. You may also fall into financial difficulties, so much so that you may have to incur debts. Businessmen are advised not to embark on any speculative ventures. Husbands and wives should guard against deception. Take care of your health.

Good dates: 23, 26 and 28. Lucky numbers: 1, 5 and 8. Favourable direction: North.

CAPRICORN (15 January----14 February) This week may be a period of mixed for-月tunes. Everything may not be peaceful on the domes-

tic front. Husbands, your children may be demanding. You are advised to check extravagance and not to lose your temper. You are advised to be more patient in dealings with your family members. Businessmen, do not make any fresh investments

Good dates: 23, 24 and 27. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: East.

AQUARIUS (15 February-14 March) This may not be a

favourable week for you. Your friends may not be helpful, even your relatives are likely to desert you in your hour of need. Professionals, a current project or

assignment may prove cumbersome A change in profession is likely. Take care of your health. On the domestic front, bad times are signified.

Goed dates: 22, 23 and 28. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 5 Favourable direction: South-west.

PISCES (15 March—14 April) Financially, this may not be a favourable week for you. Businessmen, you are advised not to make any

fresh investments. Domestic affairs may create problems. You may incur loans This is a trying week where success is still far away. Avoid making hasty decisions-you are advised to consult your elders before taking any action.

Good dates. 22, 27 and 28. Lucky numbers: 7, 8 and 9. Favourable direction: South-west.

For those born on Fridays: Most of you are endowed with a complex nature. On the one hand, you are very devoted to your wives; on the other hand, you may indulge in extra-marital affairs. This dichotomy in your disposition does not easily gain you friends

Most of you are patrons of the arts--- you love music, books and the theatre. There is also considerable potential in you for becoming doctors, scientists, politicians or lawyers. For those in search of brides, girls born on Sundays or Thursdays are ideal.

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This India



BOMBAY: Can a member sleep or snore in the House? This intriguing question figured during the proceedings of the state Assembly on the concluding day of its budget session on 22 April when an opposition member, Pandurang Fundkar (JP), drew the Chair's attention to a "snoring" Congress(I) legislator. Babanrao Dhakne (JP) told the chairman that it was possible to steal a nap in the House, but how could a member snore? Chairman J. T. Mahajan said, "No member can sleep or snore in the House. But once a member is asleep, he cannot be expected to stop snoring." And the laughter that followed Mahajan's ruling made the "snoring" member staff informed the fire service person-House—Daily (Kam Neikhup Hansing, Bombay)

JAISALMER: Ram Singh wanted somebody to write a small poem for MOTIHARI: Motihari citizens witneshim in praise of the beloved Prime sed a procession on 23 April when Minister. But like him, all other more than 100 Bihar university and labourers working in the Rajasthan Intermediate Council examinees paracanal construction work did not know ded the main streets demanding free either to read or write and so his use of unfair means at examinations. dream of presenting a poem in praise of Mrs Indira Gandhi could not be karanewale professor murdabad fulfilled. Ram Singh was determined (Down with the professor who expels to give something to the Prime Minis. the examinees)." They also appealed ter as a gift. Undaunted, the illiterate to examinees and students to attend a labourer approached the Prime Minis. meeting to chalk out ways and means ter when she neared him on her in to use unfair means without being spection visit of the canal construction expelled-Indian Nation (Satish Prawork near Gantiali village on 25 April sad, Munger) 1983. Ram Singh made bold to present a blank sheet of white paper which he HOSANAGAR: A reverse trend of unhad preserved for a poem in her touchability is being practised at praise. A visibly moved Mrs Gandhi Algerimandry village in the taluk, it is received the "real gift" to be pre- learnt. Most wells in the area are dry served as a memento of her visit- except those existing in the harijan Indian Express (P. Haridas, Vi- area. The harijans are preventing peojayawada)

absence of leakage of question papers, Garudappa Gowda, TDB president, to and due to stricter vigilance against intervene in the matter-Deccan copying this year, two Bombay uni- Herald (P. Sripathi Rao, Udupi)

versity students hit upon an entirely new approach in their attempt to ensure success in the examination. Their plans, have however, gone awry; one is poorer by Rs 100 and the other by Rs 40 and both face disciplinary action. According to authoritative university sources, a hundred rupee note was found pinned to the inner pages of a F.Y.B.A. answer paper in "Communication skills in English" and two 20 rupee notes were attached to two separate sections of a F.Y.B.Com. mathematics paper. The university has taken a serious view of the matter, which will come up before the unfair means committee and may even be reported to the police, the source said. The unvalued papers, with the currency notes attached, are now in custody of the officer on special duty for examination, Mr D. T. Joseph, IAS. How the currency notes attached papers reached the examiners, escaping the attention of invigilators and supervisors remains a puzzle—Indian Express (S. S. Raju, Bombay)

of the State of th

ERODE: Angamuthu (57) of Erode, who climbed the 100-foot flash light tower at the railway goods yard here on 25 April and refused to come down, was brought down by the fire service personnel who cajoled him and told him he would be given Rs 50 as demanded by him to visit Delhi to meet the Prime Minister. Later he was handed over to the police. It is said that the railway officials requested Angamuthu to climb down the tower. When persuasion failed, the yard "wake up" to the realities of the nel. The police are trying to find out whether Angamuthu is mentally unsound or a trickster—Hindu (R. Venkatesan, Tiruchirapalli)

They were shouting slogans, "Expel

ple belonging to other castes from taking drinking water from the wells. BOMBAY: Apparently helpless in the The villagers have requested Mr Patel

Without Comment

"Election duty" (in Assam) meant not ensuring a free and fair poll but merely making sure that the 8,000-odd officers, probationers and others who had been airlifted for polling duty did not suffer any inconvenience, much less any bruises—Arun Shourie in India Today



If today Mrs Gandhi 18 grooming her son Rajiv Gandhi to be her successor, it is not because she regards him as one most qualified for the job, but because he is the only person in her party whom she can trust-L.K. Advani

I think we are the greatest procentre state that can be in India---Farooq Abdullah, chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir

Continuity of the old leadership is gone. I am perhaps the last link left—S.A. Dange, general secretary of the All India Communist Party, in Indian Express

In my association with the Congress, I have never encouraged any factionalism...I don't want to act as the messiah of any faction—Priya Ranjan Das Munshi in Current

To enter Tamil Nadu is to enter the tinsel world in which the hero lives a segregated life, away from the ordinary artistes and extras-S. Sahay in Statesman

We cannot expect to create a utopia...As long as man lives on earth, he will love human beings, he will kill human beings, he will fight and he will be friendly-Zia-ul Haq, on the arms race in South Asia

I always fall in love while I'm working on a film...What worries me is that when these loves die, they hardly leave traces on me. I wonder why I don't suffer-Nastassia Kinski in Time

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THE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

R aj Kumar has just turned 55. Recently, he even got the Padma Bhushan Award. At a function held in Bangalore to felicitate him, the turnout was incredible. Even Raj Kumar who is used to a great deal of adulation was really overwhelmed by the spectacle of mammoth crowds cheering him.

📿 arika and Parveen Babi are chain smokers. Their cigarette-habit fame has spread far and wide. When they come down to Madras for shooting, one witnesses some really interesting scenes. In between takes the producers fall over each other to give cartons of cigarettes to the lovely ladies from Bombay.

Rumour mongers have it that Jayaprada is getting married to a north Indian. Apparently, the fact that her rival Jayasudha is able to balance her career and home might have convinced her. Jayasudha's marriage to an old flame has in no way adversely affected her career. And so now perhaps Jayaprada is reassured that she need not give up her career when she decides to get married.



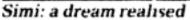
Parveen Babi: cigarettes for a lovely lady?

R amesh Sippy (Sholav Shaan, Shakti) refuses to talk about his new film, Saagar, the first romantic story he is directing with Rishi Kapoor and Dimple, who are joining hands for the first time after the memorable Bobby. Ramesh reportedly had some problems with Dimple who is shooting after more than ten years. He

was shooting some passionate scenes in the rain which made Dimple very uncomfortable for she is no longer the giggling teenager she was in Bobby. But soon the actress in her got the better of her real self and after the first day's shooting "Dimple carried herself very well and it was almost like the old times,"a friend said.

The hot and bitchy war between Bindu and Kalpana Iyer is over. Kalpana is the winner and Bindu has settled down to playing the "frustrated middle-aged vamp or the widow with sex on her mind" in a number of films.

For those who said Simi could only talk about making a film or dream about it, there is news. Simi is all set to start her first film, Rukhsat.Simi has got the busy writer, Dr Rahi Masoom Raza to write the dialogue. According to the writer, he has received many challenging scripts but the one he has received from Simi is "so touching and so different that it really challenged the writer in me. I cannot afford to give anything but the best to it. If I fail as a writer in Simi's subject I don't think I would like to be called a writer." Simi is already in America deciding locations and once they are finalised Simi's unit (Mithun Chakraborty, Parveen Babi, Marc Zuber and Annooradha, the grand-daughter of Ashok Kumar) will join her Simi wanted to do the movie with Vinod Khanna a long time ago. The film will be shot at one stretch.





Carika is easily the most Dtalked about actress in the film world. She gets all the sympathy she deserves Sarika, who dedicated her life to her mother, one day after a quarrel just left home in whatever she was wearing, got into her car and drove off leaving all her belongings— everything she had-–and never went back home again. There are many stories making the rounds. Some of them are wild stories but Sarika refuses to be drawn into any controversy. She has now moved into a one-room apartment as a paying guest and has started life all over again. Sarika is accepting every role that comes her way and the only good thing that seems to have happened is love and Karan Kapoor.







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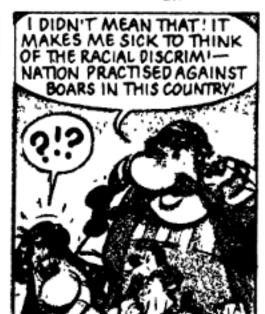




WELL, NEVER MIND'ASTERIX AND OBELIX ARE BOUND TO GO BACK ON BOARD SHIP, AND WHEN THEY DO WE'LL BE WAITING, WITH QUITE A RECEPTION COMMITTEE'

















Chess

Ftachnik (Black)



Polugaevsky (White) to move

One of the outstanding performances of the Czech Olympiad team which took the silver medal in Lucerne was the performance on third board of Lubo Ftachnik, one of a rising generation of young Czech players.

The Czechs have always had the nucleus of a strong national team with Hort and Smeikal at the helm but it was the arrival

of Ftachnik as a leading grandmaster that seemed to make all the difference. In the past the Czech team had always been rather top heavy.

In their match against the Soviet Union, which they lost 2½-1½, Ftachnik was the saving hero with the following spectacular win over Lev Polugaevsky, one of the most brilliant games of the whole Olympiad, and to add salt into the wound with the very same 'hedgehog' system in which his opponent specialises.

White: Polugaevsky. Black: Ftachnik Queen's Indian Defence Luceme 1982

1 N-KB3 N-KB3 2 P-Q84 P-Q84 P-K3 N-83 4 P-KN3 P-QN3 5 B-N2 B-N2 6 0-0 B~K2 P-Q4 PxP 8 QxP P-03 P-QR3 10 P-QN3 QN-Q2 9 R-Q1 11 P-K4 Q-N1

The latest finesse, designed to avoid 10 . . 0-0 11 B-R3 N-B4 12 P-K5 with advantage

adventage.

12 B-N2 0-0 13 N-Q2 R-Q1

Somewhat surprisingly a new idea in this position. More commonly Black puts the rook on QB1, angling for a tactical P-QN4 break.

14 P-QR4 Q-B2 15 Q-K3 QR-B1

As can often happen, White seems to be stuck for a plan against the 'hedgehog formation, enabling Black to seize the initiative.

16 . . . N-K4 17 P-KR3 P-KR4!
A move of rare quality. Little could White have suspected the weakening consequences of his last move (aiming to play P-B4 without being disturbed by the reply N(4)-N5), yet the game flows quite logically from here to its dramatic conclusion.

18 P-B4 N-N3 19 N-B3 P-Q41 20 BPxP P-R51

Classic play, undermining White's defences on the black squares and creating a variety of tactical threats, the worst being 21 . . . B-B4+ and if 22 K-R2 PxP+ or 22 K-R1 N-R4!

21 NxP NxN 22 PxN QxP 23 PxP PxP 24 P-K5 B-B4+ 25 K-R1 (DIAGRAM) N-R41!

A real thunderbolt, White has no choice but to take it.

26 QxN Q-N6!

Leaving White no good defence to the two mating threats QxB and QxRP. The point of the knight decoy was to remove the lateral queen defence 27 BxB QxP+ 28 Q-R2. 27 N-Q5

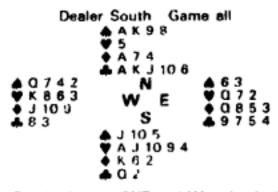
The only move to continue the game but this too meets with a spectacular refutation

27 . . . RxM 28 R-KB1 QxB+!! 29 KxQ R-Q7+ 30 Resigns It is mate after 30 K-N3 R-N7+31 K-B4 R-B1+

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

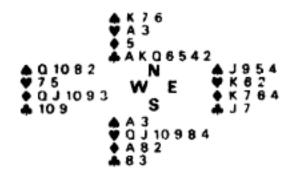
Eric Jannersten's last book, Find the Mistakes (Gollancz £6-95), has been very well rendered in English by Hugh Kelsey. The formula is a good one: a fairly normal sequence of play is shown, and overleaf one or two of the defensive cards are changed and the reader sees that his line was not the best Cute little rhyming titles are attached to the two sections — in this case Sour Play and Power Play



South plays in 6NT and West leads the Jack of diamonds in the first run-through South wins with • K and with the aid of the spade finesse runs twelve tricks. Success, but was it well played? No. South

should give himself the additional chance of finding the necessary tricks in hearts. He should win the first trick in dummy and lead \$\vec{\psi}\$ 5, gaining when East holds such as \$\vec{\psi}\$ K x or \$\vec{\mathbb{Q}}\$ x or \$\vec{K}\$ Q x.

This hand is more difficult:



Playing in Six Hearts, South wins the diamond lead, ruffs a diamond, returns to A A, and ruffs another diamond After King of spades and a spade ruff he gives up a trump and takes a bow

That was Tired Play Do you see the Inspired Play? The point is that when East comes in with \(\psi\) K he might be able to return a singleton club, locking the lead in dummy. It is better play to cash one top club earlier on

TERENCE REESE

Stamp



The portrait of Edward V on this Barbuda stamp — one of a long series portraying Pritish monarchs — is based on an illumination in the 'Dictes des Philosophes', a French manuscript translated by Earl Rivers and printed in 1477 by William Caxton. The illumination shows the earl and the printer presenting a copy of their book to the boy's father, Edward IV

C. W. HILL

Quiz

QUESTIONS

- Name the strait that connects the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean
- In Greek mythology, who was Acamas?
- What is the point of association between one nerve cell and another called?
- Who were the Asian members of the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), that expired on 1 July, 1977?
- 5. In music, what does polytonality mean?

- 6 In the 12th century, soldier knights, called Templars, were organised solely for protecting pilgrims on their journeying to and from Jerusalem. How did they get their name?
- 7 What was the peculiar feature of the Royalists, the party that supported Charles I of England?
- 8. Where would you find the Bad Lands?
 9. What is the orderly of a captain called?

eroded soil 9. Batman.

 They wore ringlets.
 In South Dakota, USA. They are actually stretches of infertile, badly Simultaneous use of several keys.
 They derived their name from the ract that they used to live in a temple which was granted to them by Baidwin II, the then king of Jerusalem

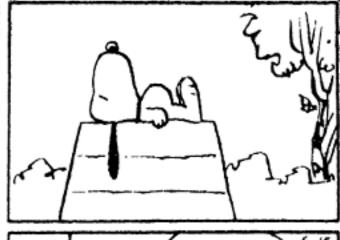
3 Synapse 4 Pakistan, Thailand and the Phino-

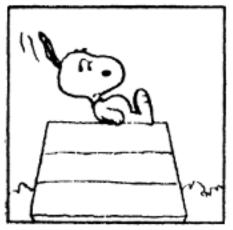
Bab-el-Mandeb.
 He was the son of Theseus and Phaedra, who went to Troy to demand the return of Helen. He and his brother also rescued their grandmother Aethra, who had been mother Aethra, who had been mother Aethra, who had been mother Aethra, when Tray fell.

VNRMEHR

PEANUTS "Good of Charliebrown" by same

















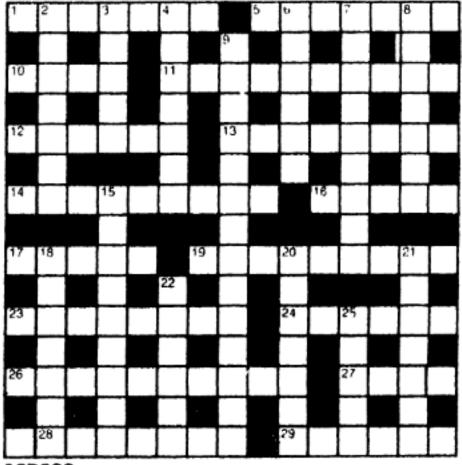






Sunday crossword

No. 5



- 1 Did these gallants of yore always have a round-table conference? (7)
- 5 Account gets into ember, to clasp fondly (7)
- 10 To rage thus seems to produce an odour (4)
- 11 Strangely, I cite dials to be impractical (10) 12 Stripe goes the wrong way for the clergyman (6)
- 13 Seems the brief disc comes last, speaking of these unsociable people
- 14 Ogle wafer to get this blooming state (9)

- 16 Belonging to a decade? Frequently (5)
- Sounds like this growth has been set (5,
- 19 Rence, veer wrongly to attain this high esteem (9)
- 23 Do these terms take place at a sitting? (8)
- 24 A million in the brake to set off! (6)
- 26 Invert lace? What trouble, to find this bridge (10)
- 27 A small bloodsucker to cover the mattress, it seems (4)
- 28 This 20's girl seems in a tizzy (7)
- 29 Led wind into turbulence, to fade away (7)

DOWN:

- 2 Let A run wild and side with neither (7)
- The hop gets mixed up with capital of Germany to produce this bird (5)
- Write about table-tennis and get a bird call (7)
- Wonderland heroine follows a million but discovers spite (6)
- Walk badly again to re-arrange cards? (9)
- She nice? Trouble say Confucius (7)
- 9 The poet of the Retreat" seems to have had such an attitude (13)
- 15 Water source organised-to get something shapely? (4, 3, 2)
- 18 This garment is apparently to be worn last (7)
- Just above the area of vision---'e's intellectual sounds like (7)
- Carl? A C A ? Nonsense, just an animal! (7)
- 20 Coal-miner loses direction, but discovers a dog (6)
- 25 Weight follows the graduate, for use of the conductor (5).

Solutions to Summay Crossword No. 4

ACROSS:

1 Parliament 6 Spur 10 Nodding 11 Mahouts 12 Canisters 13 Wiped 14 Drawn 15 Suspicion 17 Utterable 20 Emcee 21 Hives 23 Trafalgar 25 Extreme 26 Ambling 27 Soda 28 Infectious

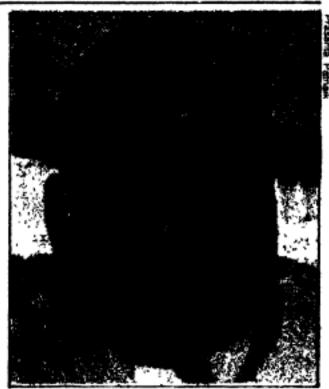
DOWN:

1 Panic 2 Redundant 3 Idiosyncrasies 4 Muggers 5 Nemesis 7 Protop 8 Residence 9 The white rabbit 14 Daughters 16 Incognito 18 Between 19 Emanate 22 Voted 24 Rages

Compiled by Rita Tewari

J.B. PATNAIK'S FUND-RAZING TACTICS

SPENDING is saving. That is Keynesian economics. But Orissa's CM Janaki Ballav Patnaik is not Keynes and he presumably believes that money not spent is saved. And he has saved quite a tidy packetto be precise, Rs 82 crores, from the funds the government of India provided for flood and drought relief operations in the state. As he did not spend the money, the grant lapsed while large parts of the state are yet to get over the havoc caused by floods last November. And if the present pace of relief work is any indication, the agricultural land damaged by the floods will take at least two years to be of any productive use. But then who cares about the farmers or those poor people affected by the floods or drought? The elections are still a year away.



J.B. Patnaik: short sighted

LOYALTY, THE IAF WAY

CIVILIAN officers in the defence ministry and the top brass of the air force seem to be fighting a running battle over the promotion of an air force officer looking after air safety. During the tenure of this officer, more than 50 aircraft of the Indian air force met with accidents. This is not all. In April when an IAF helicopter crashed into the snow near Leh, Ladakh, only one of the four occupants died on impact. And guess what happened to the other three? They were frozen to death. Reason: the helicopter did not have

the essential survival pack. So after the crash, the three survivors, instead of waiting near the helicopter for the rescue team to come, decided to walk through the snow to safety. Their bodies were later found at distances ranging between three and seven miles from the site of the crash. Even if they had waited near the site of the crash they would have been frozen. But the bosses in the air force think the IAF was safe in this officer's hands and want him to be promoted. That's camaraderie.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

COURTESY is at premium these days among politicians. In an atmosphere where dog eats dog the railway minister, A B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury, went out of his way to see that his arch political rival in his home state, West Bengal, the Marxist chief minister Jyoti Basu, was not inconvenienced when he arrived in Delhi for talks with central leaders early this month. Mr Basu's problem was that he had had a mild heart attack recently and was advised against travelling by air. The alternative was to travel by the Rajdhani express. But when Mr Choudhury learnt of this he ordered a special salon to be attached to the Kalka Mail and sent a message saying that Mr Basu should travel in that salon. The CM accepted the offer for the Rajdhani express terminates in one of the distant platforms (because of the train's length) in New Delhi station and he would have to walk some distance to reach his car. The salon was detached at Delhi station and was

brought by another engine to the VIP platform at New Delhi so that Mr Basu could board his car on alighting from the train. Hadn't Mr Choudhury vowed to drown the Marxists of West Bengal in the Bay of Bengal?



Jyoti Basu: unexpected courtes y

FREE SHOWS

IF the Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board (UPSEB) is to be believed, then each of the cinema houses in the state, on an average, receives daily power supply for two hours and 48 minutes only. But the 522 cinema halls in the state run on an average for 13 hours every day. Where do they get the rest of their power from.? And if they do, who pays? The answer is obvious—no one bills them for a large part of their consumption. From the UP-SEB's figures, it seems that every day, each cinema hall consumes power for 2.81 hours, which roughly works out to two hours and 48 minutes. So, by the grace of some officials, the cinema halls in the state pay for hardly a fourth of their actual power consumption.

SWRAJ PAUL'S NEXT TARGET

EXPATRIATE Indian businessman Swrai Paul whose usual beats, as he says, are Delhi and Calcutta, seems to be spreading his net wide. After DCM and Escorts of Delhi, he has cast his eyes on Bombay and included in his list are three Bombaybased corporate giants: Larsen and Toubro, a professionally managed company founded by two Danish engineers, manufacturing switch gears and other industrial service equipment; Mahindra and Mahindra, manufacturing Willys jeeps; and Premier Automobiles, the manufacturers of Fiat cars in India. Grapevine has it that even after finance minister Pranab Mukherjee assured the Parliament that the government would not let any nonresident hold more than five per cent of the shares in any Indian company and that the financial institutions holding the bulk of the shares in most Indian companies would generally support the promoters or their families if they were running the companies well, Swraj Paul does not appear to be worried at all. Is it possible that Paul knows more of the things to come than Mr Mukherjee? Or maybe he, like everybody else, knows that rules are made for bending.

TAILPIECE: At the Cochin session of the AICC(S), the two centres of attraction at the 1976 Gauhati AICC session—the then Congress president, Mr Dev Kanta Barua and the then youth Congress president Ambika Soni—were present. The clock has indeed turned full circle for these two leaders who were once among the foremost protagonists of the slogan: Indira is India. D.E. NIZAMUDDIN



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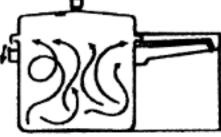


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The GRS makes the New Prestige the only

The GRS makes the New Prestige the only totally safe pressure cooker



How does it work?

All pressure cookers use steam to cook food faster. Sometimes more steam than is needed builds up inside the cooker. Under normal conditions this is let off from the weight valve on the top. If this vent gets clogged with food it could lead to an eruption.

In the New Prestige,on the rare occasion when steam builds up excessively. the GRS enables the rubber gasket to expand and stretch out of the slot and let off the steam downwards safely.



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When you replace a safety plug you may get a spurious one. This will not work in an emergency. Unfortunately you have no way of telling a genuine from a spurious safety plug. Why take a chance? THE GRS NEVER FAILS TO WORK



100% safe



*Gasket Release System

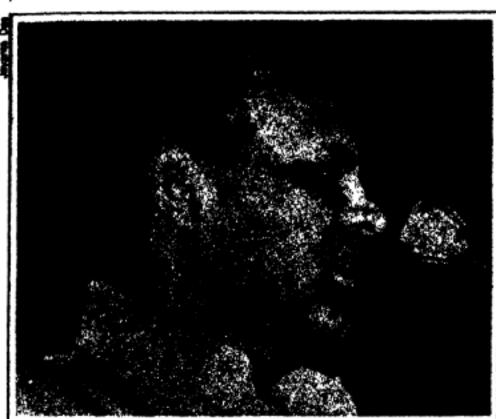
The GRS does not interiers with the normal cooking process.

No, not at all.
There is nothing to replace. All you do once the steam is let out is push the rubber gasket back into the slot with a spoon, clean the vent and use.

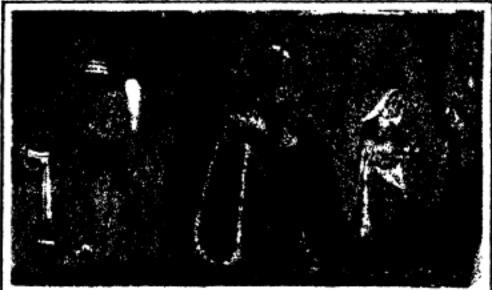
The cooker that even a child can handle—that's what the GRS makes the New Prestige.



the people who introduced pressure cooking to India



With textile workers returning to their jobs and 57 of Bombay's 60 mills functioning again, the 16-month-old Datta Samant-led strike has collapsed. What impact will this have on Datta Samant, Bombay's most firebrand trade union leader? A report by Shubhabrata Bhattacharya. Plus interviews with Datta Samant, Bal Thackrey and George Fernandes. Page 18



How does one interpret as multi-faceted a deity as Krishna who is not only a central figure of the Vedanta and Bhaktı yoga, but is also the paradigm of lovers? Khushwant Singh, in his review of the book Krishna: The Divine Lover, says that in the world of art and literature it is Krishna, the flute player and the frolic lover that is the most popular figure. Page 24

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The loneliness of the long distance runner

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Cover transparency of Datta Samant with textile workers dressed as Shivaji and his men by Mukesh Parpiani Daily

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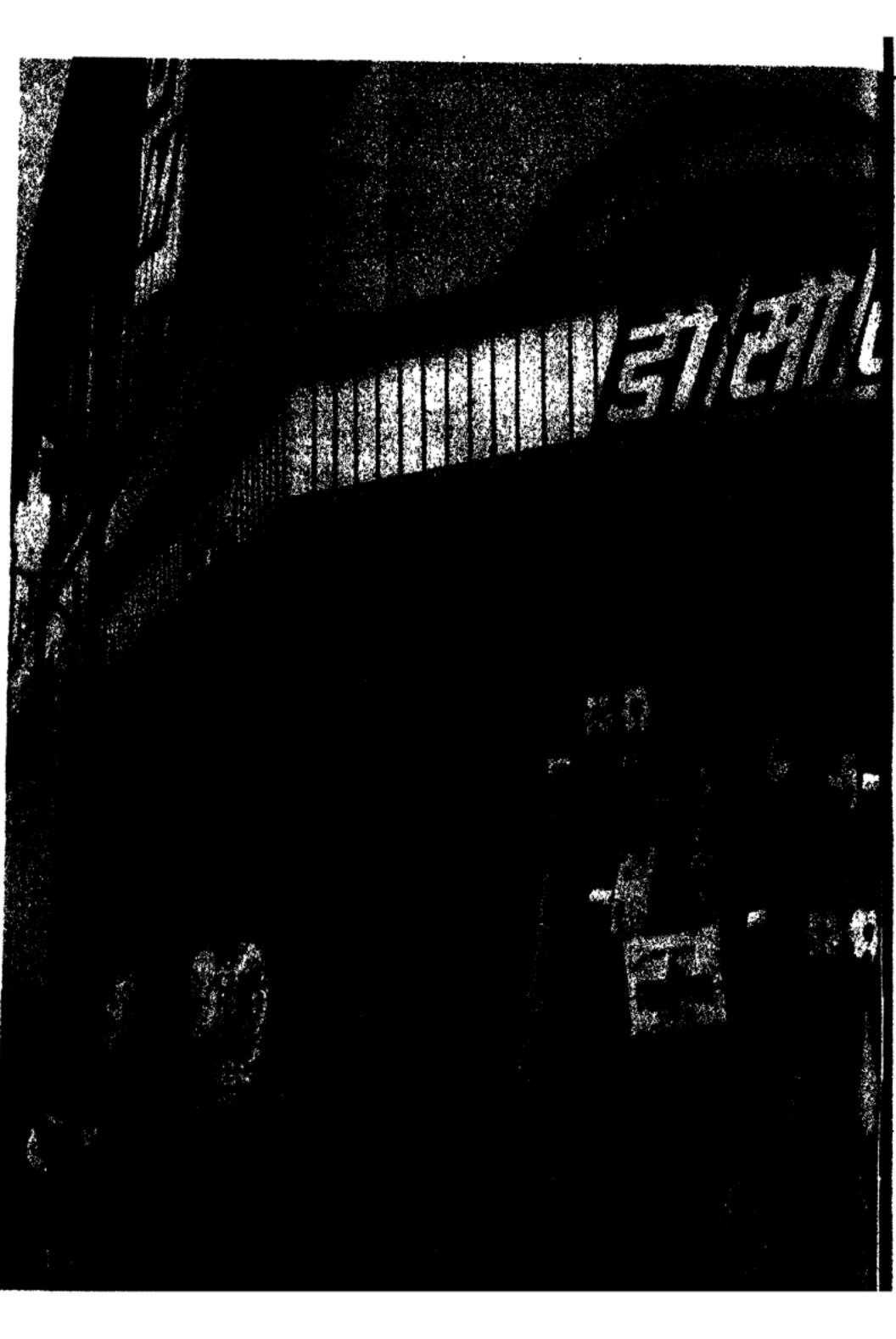
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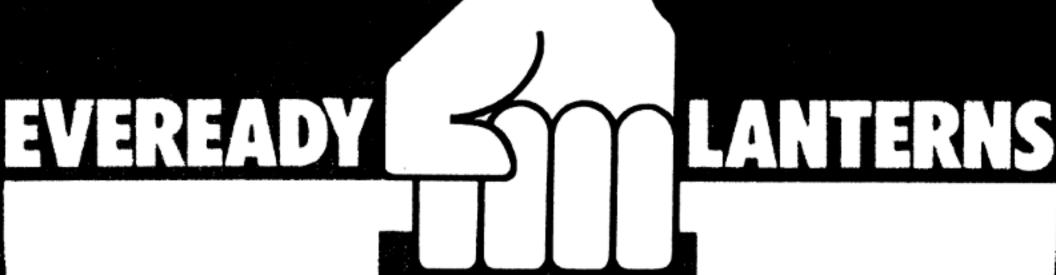
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1 100

Making an ass of the law

hen a government whose duty it is to enforce the law decides to make exceptions to the rule that everyone who breaks the law must be punished, it sets a precedent of making an ass of the law. The temptation to break laws becomes irresistible in a climate where lawbreaking has public approval and law-enforcing agencies (the police) do not feel very enthusiastic about apprehending law breakers. Let me give you some instances to prove

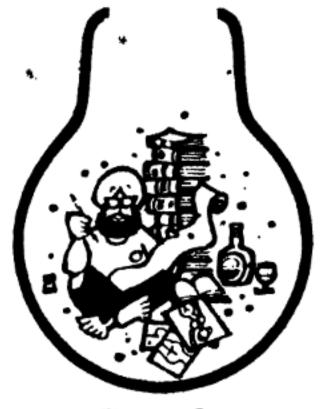
my point. During the Emergency thousands of people went underground. Amongst them were George Fernandes and his supporters and leaders of the RSS. It was strange that both managed to keep themselves well-informed about the Prime Minister's movements and people who came to see her. At least on three occasions RS leaders, against whom warrants of arrest had been issued, sauntered into my office, had coffee with me and strolled out leisurely into a busy street. I also received letters from George Fernandes commenting on my articles. Once after I had met the Prime Minister, I found a letter from him with a single-line query: "How did your meeting with Madam Dictator

go?" George Fernandes made no secret of his attempt to blow up trains. He not only got away with lawbreaking but became a cabinet minister. During the Janata regime, two youngmen hijacked an Indian Airlines plane to compel the government to release Mrs Gandhi. They not only went scot-free but one of them was rewarded by being given a seat in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly.

Members of the Dal Khalsa have twice hijacked Indian Airlines planes. Does it lie in the mouth of the government which exonerated a crime committed earlier to now demand punishment for exactly similar crimes committed later just because the criminals happen not to be its supporters? By its previous actions it has exposed its backside to a well-deserved kick from a man like Bhindranwale who has become a law unto himself.

How this kind of discrimination

has sapped the morale of the police can be seen at the Golden Temple, Amritsar. At every entrance of the Temple are posted dozens of armed constables and plainclothesmen with photographs of men on the "wanted" list. Till recently the men "wanted" were going in and out of the Temple complex without the slightest attempt by the police to



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

arrest them. The usual comment heard was in Punjabi-aseen kee laina hai-what will we get out of it? This is exactly what happened when the unfortunate DIG of Police A.S. Atwal was gunned down. His assassin walked away past policemen armed with rifles. "Why buy trouble-kyon museebat mul layeey?" For this sad state of affairs the government has no right to blame anyone except itself. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander!

On hating foreigners

I find most foreigners more likeable than my own countrymen. It is only those I cannot communicate with that I have misunderstandings and occasionally lose my temper. When foreign cabbies try to take me for a ride or storekeepers try to touch me for money that my hackles rise and I roundly curse them and their race. Thus, for example, although I like the Japanese, the Koreans and the Clfinese, I am constantly in ill-humour when visiting their countries because of their genius for misinterpreting the simplest of instructions. Of the Mongloid races the Hongkong Chinese are a race apart: they vie with the French in being the most discourteous people in the world. When in Hongkong or France I try to avoid the natives as much as possible.

As far as my own country is concerned, I have never had any problems with getting on with any people. It is only some places that

sicken me and I want to get back to my Delhi. On top of my list of places to avoid is Calcutta; my detestation for this metropolis grows with every visit. Conditions of living are so appalling that I wonder why any humans, least of all Bengalis who I regard the most humane of humans alive, live in this stinking arsehole of India. I agree with Kipling's description of Charnock's city:

from its bed, So it spread Chance-directed, chanceerected, laid and built On the Silt Palace byre, hovel-poverty and pride Side by side; And above the packed and pestilential town, Death looked down.

"As the fungus sprouts chaotic

Bombay comes a close second: Sewer-stench, stale-fish odour, sweat-stink and a vast faceless mob scuttling to and fro without any seeming purpose. If Bombayites I love did not live in Bombay, I would never go there. There are a few other cities like Ludhiana, Mathura and Varanasi which I readily label as "seen" without seeing them a second time.

Hence I was somewhat surprised to read that the English who have been travelling all over the world longer than any other people suffer from acute Xenophobia. They are happiest in their own homes and find even neighbouring English towns intolerable. This comes through vividly in The Traveller's Dictionary of Quotations published recently in England. Dickens lambasts Chelmsford as "the dullest and most stupid spot on the face of earth." Lord Byron vent his spleen on Southwell as a "cursed, detestable and abhorredabode of scandal, antiquated virginity and universal infamy." Their opinions of other races are equally damning. The French are "vain, insolent, thoughtless and blood-thirsty." The Americans "the greatest bores that the moon ever saw." The Italians "villinously rapacious." The Chinese: "It seems quite useless to kill the Chinese; it is like killing flies in July." The Arabs: "I shook hands with a friendly Arab, I still have my right hand to prove it." And so on. The explanation for the Englishman's malice towards foreigners is given through a quotation from Gerlad Brenan's The Face of Spain in which a Spaniard says to Brenan, "They tell me the English are a fine people who travel all over the world to laugh at other countries. That's fine. I thoroughly approve of it. I hope you are having a good laugh at us."

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Why the government is unwilling to do away with anticipatory bail

he top police brass have taken up with the centre the provision of anticipatory bail. Their experience of the last one decade (the Criminal Procedure Code was amended in 1973 to make the provision) shows that it has been exploited by culprits. The government is reluctant to make any change because this is the provision which was used by Mrs Gandhi and her supporters to escape arrest during the enquiry on their misdeeds of the Emergency.

The director general of police of Tamil Nadu has written to the centre that "the provision for anticipatory bail had not helped the administration of justice." He has cited the example of some accused who "wanted to confess their crime" but were prevented from doing so by "some scheming people" to stall confessions. The director general of police, Madhya Pradesh, has said: "The extant legal provisions of bail of persons arrested on criminal charges are extremely liberal, and such persons consequently succeed in securing their release on bail without much difficulty."

The director general of police, Andhra Pradesh, has said in his communication to the centre that "this provision had given to the superior courts an unfettered power to grant bail to a criminal who commits even grave crimes like murders, dacoities. For the purpose of getting this order a person need not surrender himself to the court's custody." He adds: "The courts are also using their discretion arbitrarily in granting the accused persons anticipatory bails because there are no guidelines in the section..."

This is not the first time that the police officials have drawn the government of India's attention to this matter. Two years ago, at the annual conference of the inspectors general of police a recommedation was made to the government that at least the power of sessions court to grant anticipatory bail be taken away and vested only in high courts and the Supreme Court and that those convicted of serious offences should not be released on bail during the pendency of the appeal filed by them.

But neither the home ministry nor the law ministry has given any indication of what it proposes to do. Whenever the matter has been referred to them, the reply is: "The matter is under consideration." The subject came up before the IGPs conference the other day and they said they must await the government's directions Still there is no word from the two ministries.

Obviously, the fact that politicians can escape arrest for their misdeeds and forge records etc. while they are free on anticipatory bail is perhaps the reason for the government's reticence. What is worse is that even the CBI, which should take the side of the police, has come to the support of the government.

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With is worse is that even the CBI, which should take the side of the police, has come to the support of the government. In a note, the CBI has not favoured the deletion of the provision but has listed for direction the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court concerning the interpretation and operation of the section. "If the investigation agencies have felt difficulties in investigation of a case on account of anticipatory bail," the guidelines be brought to the notice of the police officers concerned. The CBI has gone a step further to say that "any state can make local amendments to do away with the anticipatory bail as has been done by the state of UP."

It is true that though the Supreme Court and high courts have stated that the provision of law should be invoked in "deserving cases only" and have laid down the guidelines, the anticipatory bail has become a routine matter. But that is because the court granting anticipatory bail has not imposed conditions, as authorised by law. Political pressures have also worked when the mafia men have been arrested. Of course, politicians themselves have misused this provision.

When the Law Commission made the recommendation of anticipatory bail provision, its argument was that sometimes influential persons tried to implicate their rivals in false cases for the purpose of disgracing them or for making them get the odium of detention in jail for some days. Since the tendency was showing signs of a steady increase because of political rivalry, the Criminal Procedure Code was amended to provide anticipatory bail.

The government's dilemma is that it would like to deny criminals this facility but not politicians. Both the Prime Minister and the home minister have benefited from 1 this provision. So how can the law be made discriminatory? Incidentally, the anticipatory bail provision nearly came to be deleted during the Emergency but it was considered not necessary since the habeas corpus petition was suspended and other avenues to approach the court for redress in the case of illegal detention were shut. And this very provision helped Mrs Gandhi, Sanjay Gandhi and their supporters the most when the Janata government constituted probe commissions and initiated prosecutions against them. The police are asking for the impossible.

How do you expand of operations?

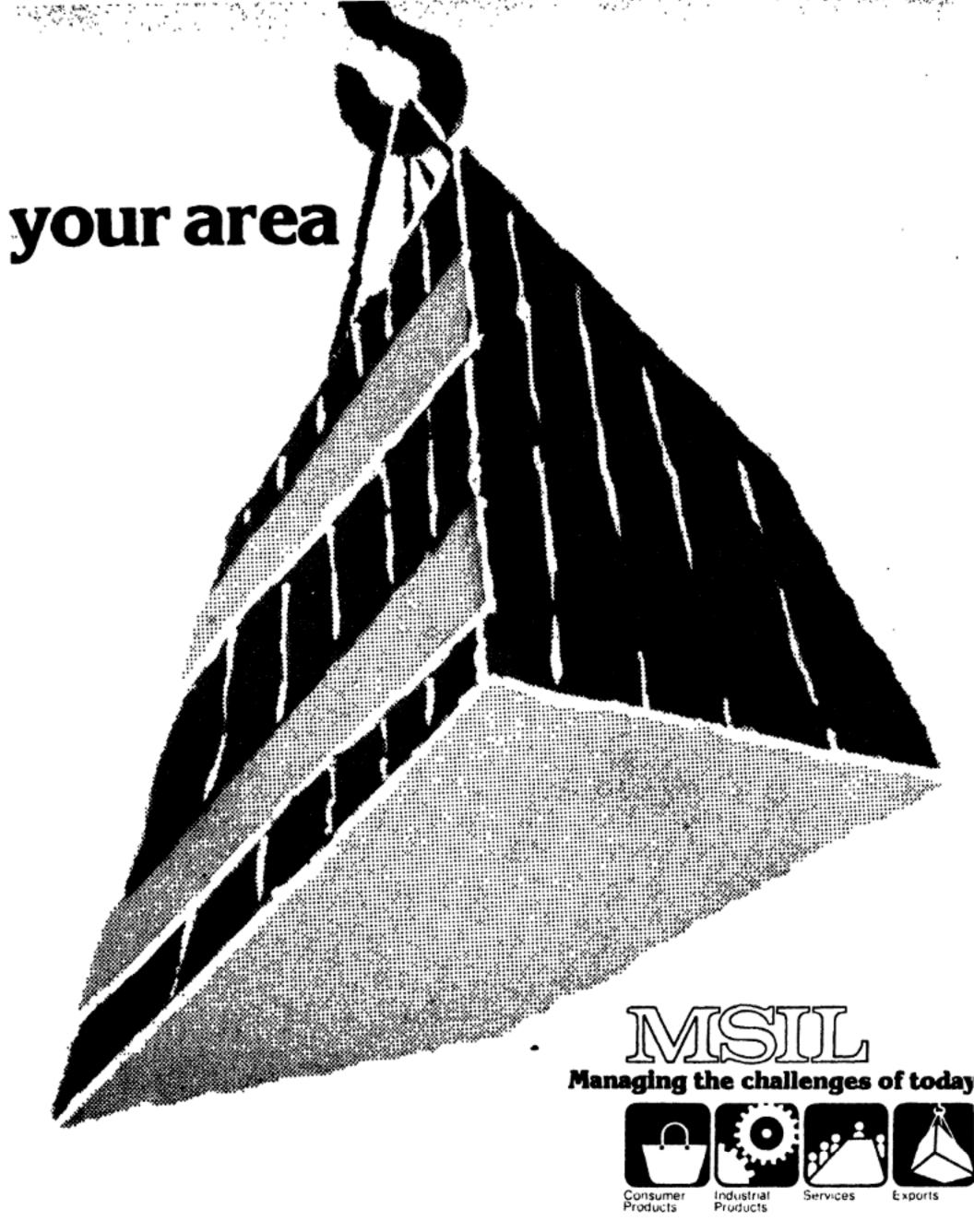
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Democratic dictator

The interview with Gen. Ershad (I am unlike a military dictator. I am not a vindictive man, 1 May) was absorbing. But it was surprising that Mr Akbar did not raise any questions on the New Moore island controversy. Brajesh Mishra, Rourkela

Little was known of General Ershad before his interview to SUNDAY Many had bracketed him with the other military dictators of the world. But the conversation revealed how concerned he was of the plight of his country. He does not believe in reigning with the

Vivek Sen, Kalyan Nagar (West Bengal)

The cover story on Gen Ershad provided a deep insight into the mind of the Chief Martial Law Administrator of Bangladesh. The interview made interesting reading.

Padmini Nagason, Madras

The interview with Gen Ershad was unique. It was evident that the general obviously meant what he said. P.V.M. Kamath, Bombay

Though Gen. Ershad did not admit it in his interview, he is forced to stress on Islamic fundamentalism in order to offset the influence of the Awami League which is still strong in the country

Md Salaudin, Barasat (West Bengal)

M.J. Akbar, with his probing questions, put Gen. Ershad on the defensive. The CMLA claimed that Bangladesh was a democratically minded nation yet he failed to justify the continuance of martial law in that country. But it is true that he is less hypocritical and has greater concern for the people than Zia-ul Haq of Pakistan.

N. Nagarajan, Vanivihar

Distorted version

This has reference to Indranil Banerjie's report, Assam: Another long, hot summer (1 May). While giving an account of the Kokrajhar incident, Mr Banerjie has provided readers with a distorted and motivated version of the truth. It seems that his source of information was government officials and the biased ministers of the Saikia cabinet. It was unfair to blame the Rajbangshi community for the violence in Kokrajhar. The politicians were the real instigators, and it is they who led innocent villagers on the rampage.

Moreover, people are being harassed by government officials for their refusal to take part in organised violence. K. Basumatary, Kokrajhar (Assam)

The Assamese consists of different

races of which Rajbangshi is one. But I failed to understand why Mr Banerjie separated the Rajbangshis from the Assamese. The Rajbangshis are a warrior class who have lost their traditional grandeur due to negligence and injustice done to them. They have lost everything to the people who have come into Assam from different states as well as from Bangladesh. A sympathetic approach to their problems is necessary at this stage. I hope Sunday will bring out the truth instead of resorting to second hand reporting. M. Roy, Gauripur

It will be wrong to presume that AASU has withdrawn its movement. This is only a temporary suspension.

Javanta Madhay, Jalukbari (Assam)

Wrong priorities

Lingh's Putting the clock back (1 May). He used his pen aimlessly on a topic of which he knew very little. The article was clearly meant to malign Zia's regime and Islam. A man of his reputation should have read more about Shariat laws before writing on that topic. It was indeed ridiculous to learn that Shariat laws are not followed in Pakistan.

Moreover, Mr Singh was not perturbed by the execution of innocent children in Assam but he was prompt enough to protest against the killing of illegitimate children in Pakistan. I would request him to care more about national problems.

M. Mustafa, Calcutta

Instead of writing on Pakistan, Mr Singh should concentrate on national problems—on Assam and Punjab in particular. Mohammed Fayyaz, Aurangabad

Mr Singh has misinterpreted the Shariat laws. Both the man and woman involved in an illegal love affair are to be stoned to death and not the woman alone as mentioned by Khushwant Singh.

A child born of such an affair is not stoned to death, but it is true that he does not possess legal rights to the property of his parents.

Abdul Ghanı, Tindivanam (Tamıl Nadu)

Khushwant Singh's criticism of the Pakistani ruler was not unfounded. Zia's habit of justifying every action of his in the name of religion is just to woo a section of the Muslim fundamentalists.

A.B. Qutub, Dibrugarh

Forcible conversions?

A nita Pratap's special report on How a Hindu-Christian communal clash was averted (24 April) made interesting reading. At the same time Ms Pratap's analysis was not objective.

In her sketch of Barry Jenkins, she records, "It would appear that far from being a Christian fanatic, Barry Jenkins is a liberal man whose social uplift schemes include the Hindus as well as Christians." But the truth is that Mr Jenkins is a man who is responsible for creating tension and bad blood between Hindus and Christians.

P. N. Natarajan, Madras

Anita Pratap's report was revealing, but I would like to throw some light on certain points. It would be wrong to say that innocent, illiterate badagas are lured by food, money and jobs and converted to Christianity. Most of the converts are quite well off.

B. N. Haldorai, Nilgiris

Sex symbol?

The cover story, Vegetables, Sex and Song (10 April) was superb. It is astonishing that an advanced country like the USA is still unable to understand the thoughts and feelings of Bhagwan Rajneesh. He discovered for himself another path to nirvanathrough the satisfaction of the soul. He is the living answer to troubled minds, to people who have the material benefits of life but no mental peace. I don't know why people consider him a 'sex symbol'.

Susheel Kumar Sarkar, Manipur

The cover story on Rajneesh revealed how the sacred and revered word guru can be denigrated, thanks to Rajneesh. He is the opposite of his prefix—'Bhagwan.' A man who is immersed in luxury and allows his disciples to indulge in free sex orgies can never be equated with God.

Mrs Kanthi, New Delhi

What is the choice, Mr Shahabuddin?

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had hoped that Syed Shahabuddin's analysis of Mrs Gandhi and the *Muslim vote* (20 March) would have been free from prejudices against Nehru and Mrs Gandhi. It was an insult to find that Mr Shahabuddin had described the Indian Muslims as bonded labourers. The Muslims have participated in the elections without any fear or compulsion. And it was Gandhi, Nehru and Indira who did their best to save and protect the Muslims of this country. It is wrong to conclude that organised patronage and personal loyalty have remained unchanged since independence. Nehru could not do a lot for the Indian Muslims because he lacked sincere followers, but certainly his daughter has fought tenaciously for the Muslims.

Mr Shahabuddin alleged that the RSS looks upon Mrs Gandhi as brahminism personified. However, he did not mention the fact that his very own Chandra Shekhar gave a clean chit to the RSS after the Aligarh and Jamshedpur riots. Nor did he mention his party's alliance with the BJP. He described the AMU amendment act of 1981 as an illusion, but failed to refer to the second-language status given to

Urdu in Bihar. M. Hashim Kidwai, Aligarh

Mr Shahabuddin tried to play an old trick by calling the Muslims bonded labourers and slaves of Mrs Gandhi. Our trade union leaders often try this trick by referring to workers who don't toe their line as "maalik ke chamche."

I hope Mr Shahabuddin is aware of the fact that one cannot vote against Mrs Gandhi without knowing who else to vote for. In 1977, the north Indian Muslims did vote for the Janata. And pray, what they get? Like me, Mr Shahabuddin, is upset because Mrs Gandhi has not restored to the Delhi Waqf Board the 205 properties identified by the Burney Committee. But during the Janata rule, when Mr Sikandar Bakht was the housing minister, was any effort made in this direction? And it is true that Moradabad cannot be erased from the chapters of history; but can Deena Nath Pande and K. K. Navman-both MLAs from Mr Shahabuddin's party-be forgotten for their role in the Jamshedpur and Aligarh riots respectively? The AMU act was an "exercise in illusion," according to Mr Shahabuddin; but it was his own, pathetic government which initiated the move-Mrs Gandhi merely completed that "exercise in illusion." How horrid of her indeed.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that the big kettle is certainly black; but so are the smaller pots. We do not know who to vote for, if not for Mrs Gandhi. This, unfortunately, is the most tragic political problem in our country today.

country today. Ahmad Rashid Shervani, New Delhi

Mr Shahabuddin's reports on communal issues tend to dwell on three aspects: the killing of Muslims; discrimination in employment; and the Muslim pattern of voting.

It is worth noting that as a class the

Muslims do not believe in introspection or heart-searching. Somehow, Islam has instilled in them anger and hatred. In India the Muslims may be victims of communal riots; but even in the predominantly Muslim countries there is hardly any peace or mutual tolerance. In India the Muslims in general supported Jinnah blindly, without realising that many of them would be left behind after partition. Many of those who did stay behind were the ones who overtly or otherwise supported the creation of Pakistan. I it, therefore, surprising that they have become victims of the very hatred that they had generated before partition?

On the subject of employment, I do not think that there is any planned or organised discrimination. The Hindus have so many castes, and each caste is vying with the other for jobs. In such an atmosphere, the Muslims are just

another 'caste.'

Lastly, the fact the Muslims have, at long last, voted for the BJP speaks of their realisation that it is best in their interests to be friends with the Hindus. The Congress(I) has taken great pains to make the average Muslim conscious of his separate identity, of the danger he faces from the average Hindu, and of the 'protection' that he constantly needs.

S. Ali Raza, Fatehgarh (Uttar Pradesh)

I have a feeling that Mr Shahabuddin is yet another Jinnah in disguise. People like him should be executed.

He has been alleging that the Hindus are illtreating the Muslims in India. Well, if Mr Shahabuddin is not satisfied with the conditions in India, he is welcome to get out of India. It is not possible for all of us to abandon our beliefs and customs to appease the Muslims. If the Muslims are backward, they alone are to blame. They believe in multiplying like animals, but are unhappy with the crumbs they get. For the Hindus there is just one country in the world; for the Muslims there are 36 to choose from. Mr Shahabuddin clearly believes that India is not for the Hindus and that they are the ones who should get out. He keeps blaming the RSS and VHP for acts of terrorism; but never does he condemn those Muslim radicals who eat the Indian salt and say that Kashmir is part of Pakistan.

The Muslims have been raping India since time immemorial. It is unfortunate that I have to use such strong words against the Muslims but moderates like me cannot tolerate people like Mr Shahabuddin who keep harping on that same issue, over and over again. Why can't we have more Zakir Hussains and

Maulana Azads?

In the recent defence debates, not a single Indian Muslim reflected a genuine concern over the acquisition of F-16s by Pakistan; this proves that the Indian Muslims are biased. When Pakistan was whipping India in the hockey finals, the Muslims here were supporting Pakistan. If this continues, the Muslims will have to leave India.

I know that SUNDAY will never publish this letter. Ramesh, Bangalore

A rare paper

I was shocked to read Seema Mustafa's report on Starvation deaths in Rajasthan (1 May). It was implied therein that Rajasthan Patrika and chest specialist Dr Gouri Shankar played the role of conspirators and helped the government to suppress the death reports. I wish to state that the information about the starvation deaths at Solankiya Tala was first published by the Rajasthan Patrika in the second week of March. Since then we have sent several correspondents not only to Solankiya Tala but also to the other places where deaths have occurred.

As regards the medical team, I wish to make it clear that the government has had nothing to do with it, either directly or otherwise. The team was sent by me alone. I approached several senior doctors in Jaipur, including two retired medical college principals. Dr Gouri Shankar, a very senior chest specialist, responded positively and a team was formed. Not only did I send doctors and para-medical personnel, but also purchased a mobile laboratory for the patients. I do not know whether, in the past, any newspaper has ever initiated such a venture. I did it with the best intention, to unearth the truth behind the deaths which were occurring near the Pakistan border. My anxicty was related to something which had never happened before.

Ms Mustafa's report gave the impression that Rajasthan Patrika is in league with medical experts and is making a deliberate attempt to suppress the truth and underscore human misery. Ms Mustafa also dubbed the paper as pro-government. As a newsman, I do not bother if I am labelled as pro or anti-government; but the fact is that I am facing five privilege motions. All these motions have been tabled by the members of the ruling Congress(I). And for the record, Mr Kuldip Nayar's son, Rajiv Nayar, is defending me in

the privilege committee.

Since Ms Mustafa visited Solankiya Tala and decided to make mention of Rajasthan Patrika in her report, I would have expected her to contact the newspaper office. Rajasthan Patrika is published from Jodhpur as well. And Jodhpur is very much on the way to Solankiya Tala. Ms Mustafa could have gone through the report prepared by our medical team. Perhaps then she would have realised that the report could not have been used by the government to convince the Assembly or Parliament.

K. C. Kulish, editor, Rajasthan Patrika Private Limited, Jaipur

Details wanted

I am compiling a complete directory containing relevant information about the addresses and professions, etc, of the old boys of St Joseph's Academy, Dehra Dun. Old boys are requested to kindly send the relevant information to the address given below. The details are required for a souvenir to be released during the golden jubilee year in 1984.

S. M. Singh, P. O. Box 80, 3B Astley Hall, Dehra Dun 248001

With the reopening of 57 of Bombay's 60 textile mills. which had been closed for the past 16 months following a strike by firebrand trade unionist or Datta Samant, the longest strike in the history of Bombay has collapsed. But what is more significant, says SHUBHABRATA BHATTACHARYA, is that the leadership of Dr Datta Samant, whose name has spelt terror in Bombay's industrial circles, is at stake today.

as the textile strike in Bombay failed? If the criterion for deciding whether there is a strike or not is the actual working of the mills, then the answer is ves. Of the 60 textile mills in Bombay, as many as 57 are functioning today. The attendance in the mills, as on 10 May 1983, was 1,32,579. Everyone connected with the textile strike-the unions, the millowners and the government-is aware that Dr Datta Samant, the person whose name had become synonymous with terror in the industrial circles of Bombay since 1980-81, is facing his Waterloo in this strike, which he prolonged for 16 months-a record in the history of strikes in this country. But no one has so far come out

with the bare truth—that the leadership of Dr Datta Samant is at stake. Even Dr Samant, on being asked, admits that the mills have started functioning, though he gives reasons to show that the failure is not his but that of the workers—an unprecedented reasoning in the annals of the trade union movement.

Before the strike began on 18 January 1981, the Bombay textile industry employed 1,62,000 workers. Together with the complement of around 20,000 people employed as clerks, technical and supervisory staff and as watch and ward staff, the total workforce in the pre-strike period was around 1.82 lakhs. In addition to this, there was a badli component of around 45,000 workers. (Bombay's textile workers are

mainly drawn from the farming community. The worker goes back to his farm from Bombay when his presence is required there, for instance at the time of sowing and harvesting. The absence of such workers is filled by temporary workers, who are known as badli workers. Normally badli workers are drawn from among the kith and kin of the permanent workers, on whose recommendation the supervisory staff take in temporary hands.) The total working strength of the industry, including the badli workers, therefore, is around 2.27 lakhs. Today, three mills, Mukesh, Shree Sitaram and Shree Madhusudan, are completely closed. Five other mills, Bradbury, Kohinoor, Finlay, Gold Mohur and Tata Textiles, are open only on pap-

Textile workers demonstrating outside The New Great Eastern Spinning and Weaving company



er; these mills are in dire straits. Together they employ some 30,000 workers. If this component be subtracted from the total pre-strike strength of 1.82 lakh workers, then the truth regarding the textile strike today is that out of a requirement of 1.52 lakh workers in the functioning mills, as many as 1.32 lakhs are reporting for duty. On the face of it,

the strike has collapsed. The defence which Dr Datta Samant is seeking to present is that . the mills have restarted because the government and the millowners, with the connivance of the representative union, the Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh (RMMS), have recruited new hands to run the mills. But even other union leaders refuse to accept that more than 10,000 new recruits have been used. The government of Maharashtra maintains that only 5,000 new recruits are there. Dr Datta Samant is known for his own brand of militancy, which has no parallel in the trade union movement of Bombay or of the country. His strikes have been known for the violence which they bring in their wake. When he first became known in the trade union circles, even murders took place in the units where his union tried to entrench itself. There were stabbings on the shopfloor. The families of the workers who refused to side with the Samant-led union were intimidated So much so that a time came when as soon as a Samant strike call was given, many workers used to prefer leaving the city for their villages so as to escape the possible violence which the entry of the Samant union could bring to their factory. The effect of the initial phase of violence created by the Samant union, therefore, was that it was not merely the managements which were afraid; tne workers themselves would panic. In effect, a strike call by Samant used to ensure that the worker, whether he liked it or not, chose to remain away from his work place. This went on till the end of 1981, the time when Dr Datta Samant decided to enter the textile industry with an indefinite strike call. The very fact that the workers have gone back to work (or, if we were to believe Dr Samant, the new

In mid-February 1982, Dr Samant had said in a workers' meeting that he would withdraw the strike even if one per cent of the workers decided to go back to work (this was reported by Navshakti on 18 February 1982). Today, Dr Samant himself agrees that some workers have gone back to work. Then why is he holding on to the facade? Is he refusing to see the reality because of his ego, or are there some other factors involved? As far as the government, both at the centre and in the state, is concerned, there seems to be no great hurry in settling the strike.

recruits have entered the mills), is a certain climbdown for Dr Datta

Samant.



Datta Samant: the beginning of the end?

Like the Assam and the Punjab tangles, the Congress(I) government seems to be in no mood to resolve the issue in Bombay. As long as these problems remain, the government has an easy excuse to tell the people that "the forces of destabilisation" are at work. If these "problems" were to disappear, then how can the people's attention be diverted from the hard realities of the failures of the government on the socioeconomic front? Moreover, the failure of the Bombay strike is bound to have a telling effect on the morale of the workers all over the country, which in any case, is at its lowest ebb. This was evident from the fee ble opposition which they offered to the imposition of the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) two years ago.

While the Congress(I) has been calling Dr Samant names and Dr Samant has been spitting venom at the government, there is no denying the fact that there was a nexus between the two at the time when Dr Samant was emerging as the number one trade unionist in Bombay. (Dr Samant had applied for the Congres s(1) ticket both during the 1980 Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections which he contested as an indepen dent, but in the Assembly poll, he was elected from the Kurla. Ghatkopar area.) His wife, Mrs Sunita Samant, is a Congress(I) municipal councillor. Mrs Sunita Samant is often seen on the platforms of her husband's meetings. But apparently, the democratic norms in the Congress(I) are such that the party cannot take any action against a member who blatantly sides with a person who, we are given to believe, is fighting the Congress(1) government. If the myth around Dr Datta Samant is destroyed, then, apart from him, some other people would also be affected.

There is no denying the fact that while Dr Samant's textile strike is on

the brink of collapse, he continues to enjoy the support from the workers in and around Bombay. This is so, mainly because wherever he enters, his minimum demand for a wage hike is in the vicinity of Rs 400. He never studies the balance sheets, which he dismisses as being "duplicate" and not worth taking into consideration. The economic viability of his demands leads the unit to a prolonged strike or a lockout. No rival trade unionist can dare oppose his strike calls because of his populist appeal. And in many cases, in the capital intensive industries, he has been able to get lucrative wage increases for the workers. In the case of the textile industry, which is largely labour intensive, he put the demand for a Rs 400 rise, which till today, has not been accepted by the managements.

It will be wrong to say that Dr Samant has had only successes and no failures. In fact, when he turned his attention towards the textile industry, the bubble was about to burst with his dismal performance in the Thana-Belapur and Kanjur Marg belts. Between 1 January 1981 and 31 December 1981, Dr Samant led 115 strikes and lockouts in this belt. 26,125 workers were involved in these strikes, involving a loss of 18.27 lakh mandays . As many as 77 of these ventures, involving 16,504 workers, ended in failures. These workers together incurred a total wage loss of Rs 1.92 crores. without gaining anything.

That year, which was the highest watermark for Dr Samant, he only resolved 38 disputes, involving 9,621 workers. But the press in Bombay, enamoured by his populist appeal, built him up as a national hero. The little known fact of these 38 settlements was that in 21 of these units, the workers (numbering 4,842) suffered more loss in wages than the monetary gains which accrued to them after the strike. In another 12

'Samant has to accept defeat'

Bal Thackrey, the Shiv Sena chief, told SUNDAY

The initial call for the textile Q: strike was given by the Girni Kamagar Sena, an affiliate of the Shlv Šena. Why did you lose the initiative to Dr Datta Samant, who has now emerged as the leading trade unionist of Bombay?

A: To begin with, I must tell you that Datta Samant is just a medical doctor and not a trade unionist like Dange, R.J. Mehta or George Fernandes. I had declared a token strike in the mills on 1 November 1981 and it was a total success. Even the mills which had never faced a strike, closed. I was thereafter about to declare an indefinite strike. But the then chief minister, Mr Antulay, called me and said, 'Give me some time and I will solve the problem.' Knowing his dynamism and quickness in taking decisions, I thought that if the workers were going to get what they wanted. without a scratch, then why not try that also? This I did because I feel that strike is a weapon which must be used very carefully. But today this weapon has lost its sharpness due to Datta Samant. So, I told the workers to give Mr Antulay some time, that is ten days, and thereafter if he did not take any action we need not take permission from him (about) whether we should strike or not. As you know, I am also a political cartoonist, so I did have that intuition, if you may say so, that at that time it was evident that in politics, that things were about to change. I thought if we were to declare an indefinite strike and there was nobody in the chair of the chief minister to take decisions, the workers would be in a precarious condition. I wanted to avoid that situation because I do not have that trade union leaders' ego in me. Though the workers did listen to my stand of not going on strike then, they were not happy. They were against the RMMS. I am of the opinion that the workers at that time were not much in a mood to get something but they wanted the defunct RMMS leadership to learn a lesson. This could have been done even without declaring an indefinite strike. The RMMS leadership is well protected by the ruling party and the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, so it became more of a legal matter than having any kind

Q: In what way was your "politic-

al prophecy" correct?

A: You see, though Mr Antulay appointed a committee, headed by him and with Srikant Jichkar and Bhaurao Patil as members to go into the millmen's grievances, unfortunately Mr Antulay had to go and Babasaheb Bhosale took the reins in his hands and ruined Maharashtra. During this political lowtide, Dr Samant declared the indefinite strike. It was absolutely foolish. Any mature trade unionist would not have shown that kind of stupidity.

Q: Is the strike still on or has it

fizzled out?

A: One has to accept that the strike has fizzled out. There is no use counting the heads of the old workers and new workers. As long as the mills have started functioning, presuming that they have taken in new hands, one has to accept defeat. There is no use in the captain of the sinking ship proudly saying that 'though the ship is sinking. I am at the helm.' The failure of this strike is a big blow to the trade union movement. The word "strike" has a peculiar charisma; or had some power behind it. Whenever we said that we were going on strike, the managements used to shiver in their pants. Today, they don't care. The trade union movement in Bombay has actually been taken back by 10 to 15 years-it will take at least as many years to revive the movement. In fact, today, the word "strike" instead of evoking fear in the managements, is evoking fear among the workers.

Q: Why do you think Dr Samant prolonged the strike? Before his emergence, the term 'fiery trade unionist' in Bombay was used for Mr Fernandes. In what way is Mr Fernandes different from Dr

Samant?

A: George had better tactics. He is a much more sensible person than Datta Samant. He knows when to declare a strike and when to withdraw. In the present case, had the strike been a success, Dr Samant would have taken the credit. But since it has fizzled out, he is blaming the workers. He is telling them, 'You forced me to declare it.' President John F. Kennedy had said that success has many fathers, defeat is an orphan. So today, the defeat of the millmens' strike is an orphan.

units, while the workers secured their demands, in real terms they got no monetary gain. In effect, the bubble around Dr Samant was built up in 1981 on the basis of only five clear cases of success out of a total of 115 disputes handled by him that year. Of these five units in two units, involving 432 workers, the monetary gains were just nominal. So, only 1.797 workers of three units (out of a total of 26,125 workers of the 115 units) clearly benefited from Dr Samant's union in 1981.

It was around this time, in end-1981, that the atmosphere was built up for the textile strike in Bombay. The opportunity was a godsend for Dr Samant. He entered the strike. took its leadership, and the myth around him continued to grow unabated, while the bare facts about his 1981 performance remained buried in the glory of the textile

strike.

Dr Samant came into the trade union movement and politics under the leadership of Mr George Fernandes in the Sixties. Mr Fernandes and the Bombay Labour Union founded by him was the most militant trade union in the city those days. Dr Samant, who practises medicine in Ghatkopar, used to attend to the stone quarry workers who used to get injured. The Bombay Labour Union had a good unit among the Ghatkopar quarry workers. One day Dr Samant met Mr Fernandes and evinced an interest in trade union work. Dr Samant's name was known to Mr Fernandes, because Dr Samant used to rush to the quarry if ever any worker was injured. Mr Fernandes enrolled Dr Samant as a member of the Socialist Party and entrusted him with trade union work in Ghatkopar. In 1967 Dr Samant was elected for the first time to the Vidhan Sabha from Kurla-Ghatkopar on the Socialist ticket. In 1969, after banks were nationalised, when the late Mr Rajni Patel led a band of progressives into the post-split Congress, Dr Samant went with him. Mr Rajni Patel played a role in building up Dr Samant in the trade union field initially. He even defended Dr Samant in court till his death. But Dr Samant, during Rajni Patel's last days, had become too important to listen to the barrister who had been his mentor.

Though he entered politics under a progressive banner, in his actions Dr Samant has been taking a stand opposed to that of the conventional leftists. Take the case of the call for a nationwide general strike given by the central trade union organisations on 19 January 1982. Dr Samant was opposed to the strike, which was called to protest against the imposition of the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA; this act places the striking worker in a position worse than that of a criminal. Under the provisions of this act,

of militancy.

enforced initially as an ordinance in July 1981 and later ratified by Parliament that year, a striking worker, the leader of the strike and anyone suspected to be providing monetary help to the strikers can be arrested without warrants and summarily tried; the criterion for deciding his guilt being the satisfaction of the detaining police officer.)

Dr Samant did not want to displease the ruling party by participating in the 19 January strike. But neither could he miss out on the popular appeal of such a strike, so he could not openly oppose it either. He, therefore, found a good solution. Trouble had been brewing in Bombay's textile mills from October-November 1981. The initial lead had been taken by the Shiv Sena, whose leader, Mr Bal Thack rey called for a token strike in all mills on 1 November 1981 and the strike was a total success. After this, the Shiv Sena was planning an indefinite strike. But the then Maharashtra chief minister, Mr A.R. Antulay, formed a high power committee, under his chairmanship, to go into the workers' demands. The Shiv Sena, thereafter, did not press for an indefinite strike. After Mr Bal Thackrey had a meeting with Mr Antulay, he announced in a public meeting at the Kamgar Maidan in Parel in mid-November 1981 that the chief minister should be given time to settle the demands. But the workers were in a mood for a strike. The news about the wage increases in other industries in Bombay had created the atmosphere. So, Dr Datta Samant stepped in. The first major meeting in connection with the strike was addressed by him at the Jambuwani Maidan in Worli on 12 December 1981. Dr Samant began his indefinite strike from 18 January 1982. It was one day before the nationwide general strike, so the Congress(I) could not confuse it with the 19 January strike. At the same time, he did not have to oppose the 19 January strike among the workers. It was an ideal case of eating one's cake and having it too. (However, in the BEST-Bombay Electric Supply and Transport Co.-Dr Samant's union opposed the 19 January strike.)

Apart from the wage demands, the major demand of the strikers has been the scrapping of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act (BIR Act), which was enacted by the interim government of Mr Jawaharlal Nehru in 1946. Under this act, unlike in other places which come under the Industrial Disputes Act, the concept of one union as the bargaining agent for one industry was introduced. Under this act, right from its inception, the Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh (RMMS) an organisation linked to the Congress, has been the representative union in Bombay's cotton textile industry.

The process of recognition is that the registrar of industries under the

Table showing progressive resumption of work in Bombay's textile mills.

| Number of mills working (out of a total of 60) | Date/Month | Complement | | |
|---|----------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------|
| | | Numberol clerks/watch and ward/ technical and supervisory st | Number of workers stf. | Total |
| 7 | 14.2.1982 | 6,500 | 200 | 6,700 |
| 8 | 1.3.1982 | 7,468 | 1,728 | 9,196 |
| 34 | 1.4.1982 | 10,676 | 4,236 | 14,912 |
| 42 | 2.5.1982 | 11,901 | 8,795 | 20,696 |
| 46 | 1.6.1982 | 13,926 | 12,819 | 26,745 |
| 47 | 2.7.1982 | 14,714 | 16,347 | 31,061 |
| 50 52 | 1.8.1982 1.9.1984 | 15,738 | 21,770 | 37,508 |
| 56 56 | 1.10.1982 | 17,208 17,873 | 26,339 37,678 | 43,547 55,551 |
| 56 | 1.11.1982 | 18,077 | 41,800 | 59,877 |
| 57 | 1.12.1982 | 18,400 | 55,244 | 73,644 |
| 57 | 1.1.1983 | 18,501 | 75,125 | 93,626 |
| 57 | 1.2.1983 | 19,438 | 82,186 | 1,01,624 |
| 58 | 1.3.1983 | 19,806 | 93,066 | 1,12,872 |
| 57 | 1.4.1983 | 19,724 | 1,02,575 | 1,22,299 |
| 57 | 2.5.1983 | 20,007 | 1,11,007 | 1,31,014 |
| 57 | 10.5.1983 | 19,841 | 1,12,738 | 1,32,579 |

BIR Act decides, on the basis of verification of membership, the representative union and that union becomes the sole bargaining agent for that industry. As a result, though in the past long strikes have been led in the textile mills by the Socialist Party and communist party affiliated unions, the final settlement has had to be signed with the RMMS. Even today, as the law stands, the final agreement of the Samant-led strike will have to be made with the RMMS. The workers, over the years, have been unhappy with the RMMS, but till today, it is the sole bargaining agent.

Source. The Millowners' Association, Bombay

While the BIR Act is criticised on account of the special status enjoyed by the RMMS in cotton textile units, what is little known is that a similar status is enjoyed by other unions as well, under this act. The City (CPI- M) Union is the sole bargaining agent in the woollen industry of Bombay, the Mill Mazdoor Sabha (socialists opposed to Mr Fernandes) is the representative union in the processing and silk industry and the union led by Mr George Fernandes has this status in the transport industry. While Dr Samant had been making a lot of noise against the BIR Act and had also applied to the registrar of industries for the derecognition of the RMMS (a plea that was rejected), so far he has not been able to put forward his union's counter claim for being recognised in place of the RMMS. In fact, the order in the case filed by Dr Samant regarding RMMS makes interesting reading. In her order dated 5 November 1982, the additional registrar of unions, Mrs Savita Bhattacharjee, who heard the case has noted that while Dr Samant's union, the Maharashtra Girni Kamgar Union, had said that it had collected membership fees from the workers for the period November 1981 to December 1982, when asked to produce the membership figures for the month of May 1982, the Samant union said that the figures were not ready.

This is not the only example of rhetoric in the Samant-led strike. Till the middle of May, 16 months after the indefinite strike started, Dr Samant had not submitted his demands in writing to the Millowners' Association, Bombay. Dr Samant took advantage of the political instability which engulfed Maharashtra following the controversial departure of Mr Antulay from the chief ministership and the installation of Mr Babasaheb Bhosale. The present chief minister, Mr Vasantdada Patil, has been asking Dr Samant to come to him with specific demands, but the demands are yet to be specified. While the Congress(1) has built up a Frankenstein in the form of Dr Samant, industrial circles in Bombay say that the one man who could have tackled Dr Samant is the opposition leader, Mr Sharad Pawar. In the absence of correct political leadership in Maharashtra, and the confused state in the Congress(1), the myth of Dr Datta Samant continues despite the collapse of the textile strike.

'Gandhiji would have given me a medal for peacefulness'

Datta Samant told SUNDAY

1. Is the textile strike on or have the mills started functioning? A: The government made all efforts to break the strike for about a year. Since April-May 1982, when they found that no worker was going to work, the government imposed section 144 CrPC in all mill areas. They restricted the movement of the workers. The Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh (RMMS) started recruiting new hands under police protection and they were sent to work under police escort. Forty of my active workers from my textile unit. including the secretary, Mr Vidyadhar Budhwarkar, were arrested under the National Security Act. So, by recruiting new hands and arresting my men, the government created panic among the workers. In the last few months, due to the famine in parts of Maharashtra and due to the long-drawn strike, few workers have joined work. Out of a total of 2.5 lakh workers, only 60 or 70 thousand workers have joined. They have recruited some 30,000 outsiders.

Then, Sitaram, Bradbury, Mukesh and some mills had closed a long time back. They have nothing to do with the strike. In these mills, 30 to 40 thousand workers are jobless since long. They are going to other mills to earn their bread. The cases of workers of a mill joining work in the same mill are restricted to 40,000 workers only.

Q. The Millowners' Association has said on 10 May that as many as 1.32 lakh workers have resumed

work. Any comment?

A: The Millowners' Association's figures are not correct. The second thing is that after 15 months of strike, after the workers have remained out for so many days, if a few workers join work, is it a criterion to decide whether or not the strike has fizzled out? The long strike shows the government's apathy towards the workers' economic problems and their links with the millowners.

O: Is the Maharashtra government taking any initiative in resolving the

strike?

A: The chief minister, Vasantdada Patil, while he is telling the workers that they should resume their duties with dignity, has no moral courage to tell the millowners that the workers should get their genuine wage rise and improved service conditions and that the workers can decide to have the union which they want as the



Datta Samant : fading charisma?

recognised union.

Q: Have you had any talks with the government recently? Have they

sent any feelers?

A: The government has taken no initiative. They are so shameless that they have allowed modernisation and automation by starving 10 to 15 lakh family members of the workers. They have good relations with the millowners. It is so surprising and damaging that such a type of government should last even for a day. I have asked them to sit across the table and work out the calculations on the cost of cloth, cotton, the profit margin etcetera and give a fair rise to the workers. But there is no response. Do you know, 12 millowners collected Rs 20 crores from the workmen on the basis of the provident fund account and did not deposit it. Similarly, Rs five crores of the employees' funds of the ESI have been swallowed. Bradbury, Sitaram and some twenty other mills have shown duplicate accounts. I can give you the details; can you publish it?

Q: Yes, as long as you go on record. A: I am a little allergic to the press (laughs). Now, here it is, take the case of Bradbury. There are 3,000 workers. The owner, Mr Ashok Kamani, has good relations with the chief minister and other ministers of the Maharashtra government. He is selling his cloth in the name of Madhu Agency. His nephew, Dr

Madan, is the chief of that agency. Per metre, two or three rupees are added on this cloth. This has been going on from 1976 onwards. The cotton of this mill is purchased in the name of Samir Agencies, and its proprietors are also relatives of the owners. This employer collected Rs 80 lakhs as provident fund (PF) and did not deposit it with the PF commissioner. I raised this in the Assembly; chief minister Bhosale told me that the owner was not traceable so there was no way to arrest him. But last month casually a case was registered. This man has taken Rs 5.86 crores as loan from the United Commercial Bank and this has not been utilised for the mill. From the Cotton Corporation of India he has taken credit worth Rs 60 lakhs, which is still pending; from the Industrial Bank, Worli, he has taken Rs two crores. His total liability is around Rs 13 crores. These things I have been shouting about in all my meetings, I have raised it in the Vidhan Sabha three or four times. But the government is blind to such economic offenders. Last month the United Commercial Bank went to the high court and the court has appointed a receiver. Thus, the 3,000 workers who are about to lose their twenty or thirty years of service, will not get any gratuity and get only 50 per cent of their PF dues.

Take Sitaram mills. This is run by the Tanatia family. They have sold seven or eight acres of land in the centre of Bombay in the name of a bogus trust. A property worth Rs four crores has been sold for Rs 20 lakhs. They have constructed residential buildings and a petrol pump. They have acquired property worth Rs 25 crores in ten years. But they have not paid Rs 1.40 crores as ESI contribution and Rs 80 lakhs as PF contribution and Rs 50 lakhs as municipal taxes. They closed this mill two years back and 6,000 workers were thrown out of their jobs. They may not get even termination

Q: Have you collected some funds for the strike?

A: Yes, Rs three crores from all my workers and distributed them to the striking millmen. I have given 10,000 people alternate jobs. The majority of the workers are from Paschim Maharashtra and Konkan. They have gone back and are doing alternative iobs.

Q: Is it true that because of pro-

longed strikes by you, in some units the workers have on their own settled the strikes and gone back to work, as in the case of Bharat Forge, Pune, Indian Express, Bombay and

Polychem, Bombay?

A: I have nearly 7,000 units in Maharashtra. In all big or small units, 80 to 90 per cent of the workers are with us. Out of this, 60 or 70 units are on strike or lockouts all the time. But in 99 per cent of the units, settlements and good agreements are b ought about without astrikeor a lockout. In the last 15 days (the interview took place on 12 May), I have settled 11 disputes very favourably for the workers, in Wellingdon Club, Garlic Engineering, Fir Tight Nut Bolt Co., Andheri, Zenith Tin Works, Mahalaxmi, Indian Lead Change, Thana, Snowcem (Killick-

Nixon group), Bayer India Ltd, Advani Orlekon and in Modistone. In the last five years, I have done 500 such settlements. Due to my union, even stone-breaking workers of Powai, Maror Chandeoli, get Rs 16 per day. I had asked chief minister Vasantdada Patil in the Assembly that while I had settled 500 disputes in five years, how many settlements had been made by the 40 labour tribunals in Maharashtra?

Suppose strikes and lockouts go on, do you expect 100 per cent results? Some employers are adamant. In Polychem, the government used repression on the workers, so they joined. But in six months they were back in my union. In Bharat Forge, 95 per cent of the workers will be with me if secret voting takes place. I have filed a case for recognition of

my union in the Pune courts. The management is adamant. They had given a rise of Rs 200, so the workers went back. Even in Indian Express if secret voting takes place, 90 per cent of the workers will be with me.

Q: While the capital intensive industries can give a rise of Rs 400 which you normally demand, do you think a labour intensive industry

like textiles can do so?

A: Yes, they can give. In fact 20 of them, like Century, Mafatlal and Bombay Dyeingcan give more than

Q: A charge against you is that whenever you enter a strike, vio-

lence takes place...

A: This has been the most peaceful strike. I have seen Dange's strikes. If Gandhiji were alive, he would have given me a medal for peacefulness.

'Samant believes in violence'

George Fernandes told SUNDAY

Q: Do you think the textile strike in Bombay is a success?

A: I am one of those who never believes that the workers lose a war and to the extent that strikes are a part of the never-ending war of the workers for the betterment of their standard of living, their wages, so on and so forth, I would not think that the workers have lost even this struggle. But if one looks at a movement in terms of its tangible achievements, then one would say that nothing very concrete has emerged from this 16 months of struggle and sacrifice. But I would hesitate to call this struggle a failure, because you cannot judge working class structures by what you get at the end of the battle; you have to look at it from a wider, historical perspective. In this particular case, after what one has gone through in Bombay, I doubt whether the millowners or the government would risk another confrontation of this kind. And there could be a much more reasonble approach on the part of the employers to the future demands, the future struggles of the workers. To that extent, I think there has been a positive outcome of even this struggle, which on the face of it, has been lost by the workers.

Q: What impact will this strike have on this industry in particular and the city of Bombay in general?

A: I would think that the general impact is not a good one, particularly in Bombay. When there is a prolonged strike and the workers do not get anything at the end of that strike, there is a certain demoralisation that spreads all

around. When two-and-a-half lakh workers get nothing from a prolonged struggle, the employers keep on pounding this into the minds of the workers. And to that extent, in Bombay the movement has suffered a setback. This would continue to remain till we have fought another battle, may be in some other sector, and we have got some dividends out of that. At the national level, I would not say that there is going to be any major setback, because at the national level we have lost a number of struggles in recent years. Take the Bangalore public sector workers' strike. We lost that strike and that was 1,40,000 men in Bangalore, Nasik, Naini and one or two other centres.

Q: You have been the leading trade unionist in Bombay. Today people claim that it is Dr Datta Samant. Have you lost your unions

to Dr Datta Samant?

A: Well, I would not say that we have lost any unions, in the sense that any particular organisation which elected me as the office bearer has decided to dump me and elect him in my place, but our working class movement has a certain migratory character. Meaning that the workers keep on migrating from one union to another and in that sense a lot of workers who were once organised in the Bombay Labour Union, which I founded, or in some other similar organisation, have migrated from the unions with which I have been associated to the unions with which others are associated. The workers look at the

union from the point of view of an union leader's capacity to deliver the goods. Therefore, they are in somebody's union; in other words, the unions have acquired a somewhat proprietory character, which is a very distorted, perverted approach to the trade union movement, which both the trade union leaders as well as the workers take. My unions have many institutions associated with them: training schools, dispensaries, etc. So, it is a different kind of trade union movement which I had built up in Bombay. It will not be easy for anybody to destroy that kind of a movement.

Q: What is your opinion of Dr Samant as a trade unionist and of the methods he employs in the

trade union movement?

A: Samant has a style which cannot be really fitted into what one understands of a trade union movement. There is an element of violence in most of the things that he says and does. I do not believe that violence is a part of the trade union movement. A strike can create conditions in which the workers can throw a stone here or picket a gate there; I am not suggesting that all strikes should be necessarily peaceful in the Gandhian sense of the term, but I conducted a national railway strike in 1974 and over a million workers participated in that strike, which is five times the number of workers participating in the textile strike. But there wasn't one incident of violence. I personally do not subscribe to the idea that there should be organised violence in the trade union movement. I think Samant subscribes to that idea.

The Divine Lover



By Khushwant Singh

n his usually provocative style Nirad C. Chaudhury denounced Indians who tailor their interpretations of Hinduism to fit Christian concepts of religion. "Thus one peddles out Vedanta to the intellectually debilitated, another Yoga to the physically degenerate, and a third Tantra to the erotomaniac who has not the courage of his lechery!" Chaudhury may be right. But how do we interpret as multi-faceted a deity as Krishna who is not only the central figure of Vedanta and Bhakti yoga, but is as well the paradigm of lovers? Before we get down to interpreting him we

should know who Krishna was, what he did to become the most popular deity in the Hindu pantheon and the different cults that were conerated in his name.

Krishna means "black" and occurs in the Vedas without any divine attributes. In the Chandogya Upanishad, there is reference to Krishna, son of Devaki, who was a scholar. Then there is a rishi named Krishna; and a "loud yelling" Vaksha (demon) with the same name who lived along the banks of the Jumna and was slain by Indra. There was also a Dravidian Krishna who ruled over 50,000 subjects all known as Krishnas and all

Brahmin-haters who were massacred along with their pregnant wives to destroy all possibility of their seed sprouting into more Krishnas. Since this Dravidian Krishna was also a protector of cows, Hindu scholars have conjectured that the name applied to a tribe of cow-worshippers who stoutly resisted the Aryan invasions. Thus we can conclude that Krishnas were a swarthy race deserving of the description Shyam (black) given them by the blonde, blue-eyed, light-skinned Aryans. However the Krishna that most of us are familiar with is the Krishna of the Mahabharat, the Bhagwat Purana and the



Harivansa. Although regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu, he is worshipped as the Supreme God in his own right. He goes by a variety of names: Balaji, Damodar, Dasarha, Parthasarthy, Ranchoda, Madangopala (passionate cowherd), Kanhaya (lover of virgins), Kishorilal (beloved of virgins), Madhava, Mohan, Murali, Murari and Shyam. Needless to say, in the world of art and literature it is Krishna the beloved of Radha and the gopis, the flute player and froliclover that is the most popular figure. This is precisely what this lavishly illustrated book printed in Switzerland and written by scholars of international repute is all about (Krishna-The Divine Lover, B.I. Publications, price Rs 400).

In all climes and languages love is a many-splendoured phenomenon. But nowhere in the world did it arouse as much passion among scholars and sages as it did in ancient India. Treatise on the art of lovemaking like Kamashastra and Kokshastra were entirely devoted to erotica and techniques of achieving successful coition. Even when pronouncing on mystic or divine love our ancients could not resist translating the longing of the human soul for union with god into desire for sexual fulfilment. When it came to love between mortals, they wasted little time in preliminaries like words of admiration or affection and got down to the real business of making love. This is not surprising since Kama, the god of love, is often identified with fire (agni) and his wife Rati







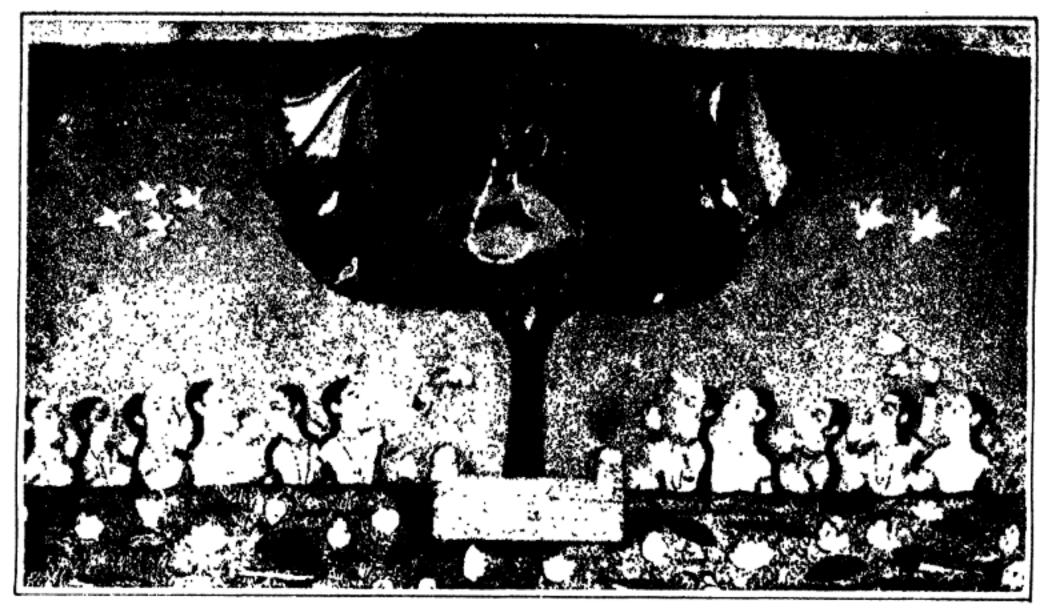
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with sexual desire. She is portrayed holding a mirror (darpana) to arouse

darpa— wantonness.

In Krishna's multifarious affairs with Radha (who incidentally was his aunt) and the gopis we are taken through the entire gamut of emotions, divine as well as earthy, dealt with in minute detail. Songs and poems on the subject are in Sringarras-"horny." All the ten stages of love (Surara-dasam)beginning with delight at the first glance of the beloved to utter distraction are depicted. True to their habit of cataloguing everthing our ancients began with purva raga (the birth of love) and went through prema, priti and Maithuna jvara (coition fever) to Tuli (oneness achieved by simultaneous orgasm).

The pictures in the book speak for themselves; they are an eloquent tribute to the artists (mostly unknown), to the selectors (not many have been published before) and to the master-printers who have succeeded in bringing out their rich colours. The poetry has unfortunately been relegated to the end of the book. Appropriate verses carried alongside the pictures should have enhanced the value of the book. We have Vatsalya describing the beauty of baby Krishna in slumber:

His sleepy eyes,

black beneath their drooping lids, Are like a pair of bees, each trapped at dusk

in the night-closing petals of a

flower.

Geeta Govind abounds with beautiful descriptions of woodlands around Vrindaban:

Winds from sandalwood mountains

Blow now toward Himalayan peaks,

Longing to plunge in the snow After weeks of writhing In the hot bellies of ground snakes,

Melodious voices of cuckoos Raise their joyful sound When they spy the buds On tips of smooth mango branches.

And the dangers that lovers en counter on their way to their places of meeting:

Clouds break. Arrows of water fall Like the last blows That end the world. The night is thick With lamp-black for the eyes. What but you, O friend Would keep so late a tryst? The earth is a pool of mud With dreaded snakes at large. Darkness is everywhere, Save where your feet Flash with lightning.

There are innumerable erotic scenes depicting group love as in Keshav Das:

Once in the woods when Krishna did sport

With Radha, seeking pleasures sweet,

And shouts of joy did issue forth As oft when lustful lovers meet When she did take the active role Her necklace studded with dark gems

Did wildly shake thus to and fro. Says Keshava, as if it were the sun Had taken Saturn on his lap And joyfully him he had swayed In swing of black silk-so did flash

Those dark gems with each move she made.

It is Keshav Das again who has this amusing account of Krishna "surprising" one of the inayikas feigning sleep:

When she knew Shri Krishna to

approach She feigned sleep, softly he

To wake her--she would not be

woke: Then venturing forth, his hand he

placed Upon her rising bosom, so

That she did titillated feel; Emboldened thus his hand did go Her Waist-band to unite, when

Did start and rise, and knowing him close

Said, 'All day long, oh! boor illbred,

Your cows you tend and at night force

Yourself in another woman's bed!'

It is a pity that the size and price of this book will make it into an adornment on the coffee tables in the homes of rich people where people will admire its beautiful pictures without bothering to read the accompanying text. Here we have scholars of repute: Professor B.N. Goswamy and his wife Karuna, Karl Khandalvala and Kapila Vatsayana along with foreign experts Mrs Dallapiccola (Heidelberg), Enrico Isacco and Dr Spink (Ann Arbour). Together they have provided us a feast for the eyes as well as for the mind.

The paintings have been reproduced from the book, Krishna: The Divine Lover.

A crisis of legitimacy

The naked realities of power must necessarily be covered by an ideological fig-leaf, and in Pakistan today, it is the fig-leaf of Islam. Islam is being conveniently used to maintain an iron grip over the state by a corrupt army. But the hour of reckoning is not too far, says TARIQ ALI in the concluding portion of an extract from his book, Can Pakistan survive?

(Penguin Books; price Rs 46.61).

he break-up of Pakistan in 1971 did not, as might have been expected, result in any serious split within the country's political parties. Politics had become so thoroughly regionalised that the decomposition of the 1947 state did not seriously affect the parties, in any of its component parts. The Muslim League had represented the first major attempt to construct a national political party in Pakistan. Its roots, however, had remained extremely weak and, failing to acquire a mass base, it disintegrated soon after Jinnah's death There were a number of reasons why the latter failed to create a substantial party organisation. Uttar Pradesh, one of the main regions of the Muslim petty bourgeoisie which he represented, did not become part of Pakistan; the post-Partition refugees from India, moreover, did not constitute a numerically significant or politically stable force, hence, without a base in the present provinces of Pakistan, Jinnah tended to confirm provincial landlords as the representatives of the Muslim League. The low level of productive forces (the virtual nonexistence of capitalism) in the areas that now constitute Pakistan meant that landlords were the dominant social force inside the ruling class.

The Muslim League, unlike the Indian Congress, was never able to become a reliable political party for the ruling class, capable of either mystifying or controlling the masses. After Jinnah's death, it discredited itself permanently, when it was reduced to a clutch of corrupt and bickering factions. Hence, from the outset Pakistan was dominated by the army and bureaucracy. It was the latter which was crucial in the development of capitalism in Pakistan. The links between the new entrepreneurs and the civil service were always close and mutually beneficial. As long as the civil servants exercised untrammelled power there was no reason why the new ruling class should develop its own political party. The army and bureaucracy guaranteed its interests more effectively than the Muslim League or any other surrogate could have cone. The failure of the Pakistani ruling class to produce a political instrument also prevented the emergence of a national alternative from the centre or left.

Pre-Partition politics continued to dominate Pakistan's provinces well after independence. In the NWFP and Baluchistan, the Muslim League had enjoyed little organised support. The Pathan and Baluch leaders engaged in the struggle against imperialism were part of a nationalist offensive which the Muslim League was precisely created to sabotage. The two border provinces remained under the strong influence of anti-League nationalists. For a long period they worked in concert, but the growing political crisis separated them. The civil war in Baluchistan transformed the political life of that province: the birth of the BPLF and the subsequent split between Bizenjo and Wali Khan was the consequence. In the Punjab and Sind, landlords dominated politics and feudalist hegemony made political parties almost redundant, though this hold was partially broken by the emergence of populism under the banners of Bhutto's PPP.

PPP's popularity was based on what it promised rather than what it

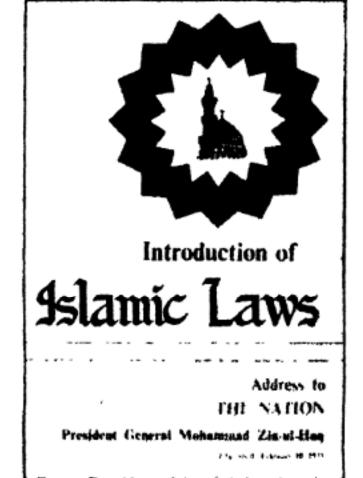
achieved. In Pakistan, no major political leader had ever argued that the interests of the common people were paramount. However, Bhutto's place in Pakistani history is assured because he encouraged the downtrodden to speak their bitterness. That was novel. But since Bhutto's death, the PPP remains a shell. It has two courageous women at its head (Bhutto's widow and eldest daughter), but it lacks a cadre, experienced and dedicated organisers, a trade-union and peasant base or even a politically stable student organisation. Its ideology remains confused.

Few doubt that the PPP would win a majority in any election. The question, however, is whether any of Pakistan's political parties are sufficiently well-organised to initiate a mass movement that could force a general election. The Punjab is here the crucial province. If the Punjabi masses take to the streets, the present military regime will fall. But the political parties in the Punjab are weak. The PPP has support, but no serious network. The Tehrik-i-Istiqlal led by Air Marshal Asghar Khan is a typical Pakistani organisation, consisting largely of national or provincial leaders, together with bandwagon careerists who hoped that the army might tolerate the moderate Tehrik as a counter to the PPP. The Tehrik's political programme is based on a limited modernisation of the state and a sprinkling of

country. There can be little doubt that, in the eventuality of a spontaneous mass uprising, it would be the PPP (in the Punjab and Sind) that would reap the harvest. Its difficulty lies in the fact that it is not strong enough to initiate such a rebellion, but is dependent on the mood of the masses. Political consciousness is difficult to gauge when there are no elections. The failure of mass protests to materialise after the execution of Bhutto was an indication that people were tired. They had struggled for five months to overthrow Ayub in 1968-69. They had protested against the election-rigging of 1977. Many had indeed voted against Bhut-

reforms. Committed to the 'mixed economy', it is ambiguous on every

major question confronting the



to, but not with the intention of bringing about martial law. Blame has been attached to Bhutto's lieutenants, in particular Hafiz Pirzada and Mumtaz Bhutto, for the lack of any mass action preceding or following his execution: to be sure, the PPP leaders cannot totally evade responsibility, but they were paying the price of the earlier failure to construct a political party in the real sense of the word. Nor could they simply leap over the masses, to unleash strikes and demonstrations. At all events, the fact that the people remained passive, if anguished, spectators throughout the trial and execution of Bhutto was a sufficient indicator that the army would have an easy run for a few years.

Subsequently, the trauma that followed Bhutto's execution brought about a detachment from politics. This was not a de-politicisation, but reflected a feeling of helplessness and demoralisation, a combination of sadness and fear. It was quite common to hear a Punjabi say: 'If they could kill a powerful man like Bhutto, who are we? We are nothings.' The brutalisation of Pakistani politics helped to atomize popular consciousness. The military regime hoped that in this way it could expunge from the historical memory of the masses all recollection of their collective strength. This, however, it has not succeeded in doing. There are signs that change is not far away. How it will come is uncertain: few can ever accurately predict the creativity of the masses in movement. None, however, believe that Pakistan's political parties, as they exist today, could be the motor force for removing the army permanently from the political scene.

The Pakistani left

The history of the communist movement in South Asia is inextricably linked to the Russian revolution and its aftermath. The fall of Tsarism and the establishment of a Soviet Republic in Petrograd had a profound impact on a layer of revolutionary nationalists in India. Instinctively many ordinary people felt they were witnessing the birth of a state that would be the friend and ally of oppressed peoples everywhere. The unilateral abrogation of all former imperialist treaties, and the publication of secrét protocols designed to prolong colonial subjugation in the Near East, won the new revolution approval in many parts of the world. The internationalism displayed by the Bolsheviks was concretized by the formation of the Communist International in 1919.

At its Fourth Congress in 1922, the Comintern established certain guidelines designed to aid the fledgling communist parties in the colonies. These were, of necessity, extremely general, schematic and abstract; but compared to the 'advice' proffered from Moscow in the Thir-

ties, Forties and Fifties, they appear as models of clarity: "The refusal of the communists in the colonies to participate against imperialist oppression on the pretext of alleged 'defence' of independent class interests is opportunism of the worst kind, calculated only to discredit the proletarian revolution in the East. No less harmful must be recognised the attempt to isolate oneself from the immediate and everyday interests of the working class for the sake of 'national unity' or 'civil peace' with bourgeois democracy. The communist and working-class parties in the colonies and semicolonial countries are confronted by a two-fold task: on the one hand to fight for the most radical solutions of the problems of bourgeois. democratic revolution, directed to the conquest of political independence, and on the other to organise the workers and peasants to fight for their special class interests and to take advantage of the antagonism existing in the national bourgeoisdemocratic camp... The working class must know that only by deepening and extending the struggle against the imperialism of the great powers can its role as revolutionary leader be fulfilled."

The tragedy of Indian communism was that its main period of growth was the Forties, when the revolutionary potential of October 1917 had already been squandered and falsified by the emergence of Stalinism. From then on, the policies and perspectives of the Comintern parties were to be determined by the needs of the Soviet bureaucracy. Accordingly, the 1922 Theses became a dead letter. Indian communists, far from avoiding the twin errors outlined above, pursued a policy which alternated between a grotesque sectarianism towards the national movement and outright class col-



laboration. The result was a dismal failure with respect to the crucial question of winning power. Why did the Indian communists fail, while the Chinese and Vietnamese parties succeeded? Were the latter not part of the Comintern as well? These questions have been raised by Indian communists themselves over the last three decades. The answer is not a simple one. This is not the place to enter into a detailed comparative survey of Chinese, Vietnamese and Indian communism. However, a few elementary features differentiating the three parties can briefly be mentioned.

The Chinese party does not possess an unblemished record of linear ascent from a handful of militants to the seizure of power. Disastrous advice from the Comintern was accepted by the Chinese communists in the late Twenties. The result was catastrophic: in 1927, Chinese communists were butchered in cold blood by troops in Shanghai acting under the orders of General Chiang Kai-shek, characterised by Stalin and his associates as a 'progressive' leader of the 'democratic bourgeoisie'. The subsequent rebuilding of the party was a lengthy process, aided inadvertently by the Japanese invasion of China. Mao's partisans built a party-army that won mass support by becoming the most effective means of defence against the Japanese colonialists. After the defeat of the Japanese, Mao effectively disregarded Stalin's advice in practice by refusing to disband the Chinese communist armies. A peasant uprising in the North saw a renewed civil war in which the Maoists triumphed over Chiang Kaishek without too much difficulty. Chiang's soldiery deserted with its weapons in tens of thousands.

The Vietnamese party was aided by the virtual non-existence of an indigenous bourgeoisie or political parties allied to the latter's cause. In 1960, under questioning from an Indian communist leader, Ho Chi Minh was blunt and to the point: "He gave a characteristic reply when I asked him (Ho Chi Minh) how in his view the Vietnamese party, which in the Thirties was not much bigger than the Indian party, had succeeded whereas we had failed. He replied: 'There you had Mahatma Gandhi, here I am the Mahatma Gandhi!' He then went on to explain how they had utilised the anti-imperialist struggle to build their hegemony over the masses. They had become the leading force in the antiimperialist struggle and moved on to socialism. The clear implication was that in India it was Gandhi and the Congress who had kept control and that the CPI was at fault. He also explained as did other Vietnamese leaders the endemic weaknesses of the Vietnamese bourgeoisie, which of course contrasted very vividly with the strength of the Ladian

bourgeoisie."

Indian communists were confronted with an extremely strong and powerful enemy in the shape of the colonial state, as well as with a nationalist party, the Indian Congress, which had direct links with indigenous capitalists and the landowning classes. Bourgeois nationalism in India was not something which could simply be swept aside, a fact never properly understood by the Comintern (even during its revolutionary phase). A further difference with respect to China was the diversity of the rural structures pertaining to the two largest Asian states. The role of religion and caste in the Indian villages was coupled with the existence for centuries of a layer of intermediary exploiters: both were preserved and extended by the British, creating a potent counter-revolutionary stability. The major differences between the two countries, however, existed at the level of the state machine. In China, throughout the pre-revolutionary periods and revolutionary upsurges of the Twenties, Thirties and Forties, the state machine was either weak or distracted or both. It is true that the Kuomintang state apparatus, albeit more unstable than the colonial state in India was much more repressive: the systematic elimination of communists and progressives of all hues by the KMT was far more savage than British repression in Amritsar or crushing of the Moplah uprising in Malabar. Executions of political prisoners remained a novelty in twentieth-century British India. However, the strength of the British colonial state lay in its whole relationship to the social formation over which it ruled, rather than in pure coercion: as we have already seen, Britain never needed more than 50,000 troops to maintain control of India's multi-millioned masses.

In China, the explosive impact of an expanding capitalism wreaked havoc on existing social relations and laid the basis for the first Chinese revolution in 1911. Subsequent depredations by the contending forces of the major imperialist powers further undermined the remnants of the traditional social order. in India, meanwhile, the development of the colonial state paved the way for a unique amalgam of precapitalist social relations with aspects of a modern state machine, complete with the trappings of a bourgeois democracy albeit tightly controlled by Whitehall: Indian judges and local councils could already be observed in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Marx had forecast that the British would bring a bourgeois revolution to India, and though he was wrong, the colonial state did achieve a very partial and deformed variant of such a revolution. It is this that explains the relatively smooth transfer of power 'smooth' in the sense that it

averted a social revolution, not that it saved lives, since nearly a million people died as innocent victims of communal violence and ten million bitter refugees sought new homes across confessional frontiers.

The point of this lengthy digression has been to drive home the fact that the weakness of Indian communism cannot be explained simply by Comintern blundering. Mistakes, after all, were committed on an extravagant scale in China, Vietnam and India alike. It was the misfortune of Indian communists to be confronted with a far more cunning and powerful opponent than their Chinese and Vietnamese comrades in the Thirties and Forties. Here the Comintern's failures were multiplied by the deadening impact of Stalinism, whose theoretical absolutism and rigid ideological monopoly were especially damaging in India. Critical thought was vital to comprehend and analyse the complex structures of the colonial state and the vagaries of bourgeois nationalism, and to evolve a strategy that could win over the masses. Its absence led to costly political blunders. Bipan Chandra, the wellknown Indian Marxist historian and political scientist, attempting in a constructive and non-sectarian fashion to analyse the weakness of Indian Marxism, has concluded:

"Almost all aspects of the weakness of the Indian Marxists in analysing the social reality, in applying Marxism to India, in evolving correct political practice, and in the failure to correct mistakes in time, are linked to the virtual absence of free discussion amongst them... the Indian Marxist, political worker or intellectual has learnt to exercise drastic, and disastrous self-censorship... The cult of the great man or men has greatly eroded the democratic and scientific notion that the acquisition of knowledge of society is a collective activity... The average Indian Marxist therefore genuinely believes that he is not fit to think on or debate matters of theory, ideology, and higher or broader political prac-

The two great errors committed by Indian communism were both related to its subordination of workers' and peasants' interests to the wishes of Moscow. The failure to participate in and help the Quit India movement of 1942 handed India over on a platter to bourgeois nationalism and simultaneously weakened the left inside the Congress Party. The second misjudgment was grounded in a theoretical incapacity to comprehend the complexities of the national question. The CPI failed to analyse the forces motivating Hindu and Muslim communalism. It supported the demand for a confessional state of Pakistan, disguising its ignorance by arguing that communalism was a 'problem of growing

nationalities? At the most critical period in the history of the subcontinent, the CPI, congenitally incapable of developing an independent policy protested itself before the Congress and the Muslim League. In March 1946, the British communist R. P. Dutt intervened in an attempt to lift the mist of confusion, maintaining that the demand for Pakistan was based on religion, not nationality. Five months later, the CPI obligingly altered course. They now explained that the demand for an independent Pakistan was a reactionary one, based on the needs of 'Muslim bourgeois and feudal vested interests, who are seeking a compromise with imperialism for a share of the administration in divided India'. What the comrades could not explain was how the League had managed to build an element of mass support. We are not suggesting that a correct evaluation by the CPI would have avoided the bloodbath of 1947. What it would have done, however, was help to lay the foundations for a strong and powerful communist movement throughout South Asia in the period following independence.

When Partition came, the tiny band of Pakistani communists active in the Punjab, Sind, the NWFP and Baluchistan saw their numbers depleted by the mass migration of Hindus and Sikhs. The refugees arriving from Uttar Pradesh or Indian Punjab were unlikely recruits to the communist cause. The history of communism in this region is not particularly edifying or instructive. The weaknesses of Indian Marxism were reproduced in an exaggerated form in Pakistan, and with tragic consequences. Pakistani communism never succeeded in implanting itself as a national, political current, except in East Pakistan prior to 1971. The movement was utterly disoriented by the Sino-Soviet split: the Stalinist tradition had not prepared the cadres for the existence of two centres of the world communist movement. A majority of Pakistani communists, brought up in the stultifying atmosphere of monolithism and stunned by the split, finally decided to back Peking. This, however, was not for 'leftist' reasons as in India. Peking's break with Moscow and conflict with India had led to its adopting a friendly attitude towards the Pakistani military regime under Ayub Khan: many communists who became Maoists accordingly found themselves, for the first time in their political lives, the beneficiaries of state patronage.

The results were extremely negative for the entire Pakistani left. Its opportunist attitude to the regime meant that the 1968 wave of revolt from below which toppled Ayub also bypassed the Maoists, who had initially opposed the mass movement or remained passive. It was the PPP which gained the allegiance of the 'new left' which emerged at that

time. The populist years with Bhutto in power generated more disillusionment on the left. At the time of the military coup of July 1977, the Pakistani left was much weaker than it had been in 1947 or 1968. This was an unmitigated disaster for any hope of social transformation in the country. Unlike its Indian counterpart, the Pakistani left from 1947 onwards confronted a weak and unstable state. As the decades went by, the crisis of legitimacy mounted. Yet it was not the left, but Bengali nationalism which triumphed in the East and a populist-nationalism which grew in the West prior to the collapse of the old state and the civil

The situation today is extremely bleak. Splinters from the early Communist Party still survive, but they are shadows of their former selves. Maoism is in total decline: few former enthusiasts of the cult could swallow the drastic turn in Chinese foreign policy. Some have returned to Moscow's fold, thus tragically confirming that the fundamental problems of South Asian Marxism have yet to be resolved. Others have retreated from politics. There are Marxist study-circles in a number of cities, and of late there has been a limited resurgence of interest in the classics of Marxism. It would, however, be foolish to imagine that Marxist forces stand poised to bring down the regime. If the state is threatened, it is not the sudden, subterranean growth of a renovated Marxismthat provides the challenge. The experience of communist governments in West Bengal and Kerala, the murky situation in Afghanistan or the role of the Tudeh Party in Iran are not designed to inspire a new generation of militants. The current world outlook of the Chinese leaders and the Vietnamese embroilment in Kampuchea have also helped to create a sense of despondency and gloom. Only when the reasons for past failures are thoroughly assimilated on the plane of theory, and when the masses re-enter the political stage from the left, could this crisis of perspectives be overcome. In that sense, the situation of the left, though bad, is certainly not permanent.

Can Pakistan survive?

Soon after he took power in December 1971 as the first civilian to be appointed Chief Martial Law Administrator, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was confronted with the problem of the army. He understood the dimensions of the difficulty. In one flight of rhetoric, he went so far as to state: 'We must take a leaf or two out of North Vietnam's military textbook. A People's Army rather than a conventional army, that is the philosophy that will guide us in our new defence policy.' It was a pleasing thought, but what Bhutto should also

The only effective basis for overthrowing the military regime could be a mass movement repeating, in more difficult circumstances, what it accomplished in 1968-69 The task today, therefore, is the political arming of the masses so that at the right moment they can both acquire and utilise weapons to defend themselves.

have understood was that the Vietnamese army was not a product of French or American imperialism. It was a 'people's army' precisely because it had been built by the people in a struggle against four colonial powers: France, Japan, Britain and the United States of America. Whereas the man who was to be the first C-in-C of the Pakistan army, General Sir Douglas Gracey, had as it happened led many future soldiers and officers of that army precisely to reoccupy Saigon and hold it till the French could muster a sufficient force to reassert their authority. The Pakistani army could not be transformed by decree, but only by a social revolution: an understanding of this fact is central, if we wish to ask how the army could be removed from power on a permanent basis.

When General Zia says that Pakis. tan would collapse without Islam, he is utilising an ideological fig-leaf to cover the naked realities of power. What he really means is that, without the army, Pakistan would not exist as before. Islam is a convenience designed to maintain iron control over every different aspect of political and social life. The economy is now in the trusted hands of Dr Mahbubul Haq of the World Bank, who will re-build the private sector in the name of 'Islamic Justice' How long can this farce continue? What strategy should be pursued to bring an end to this regime? The choices vary, depending on which layer one chooses to question. The politicians want to see a return to the 1973 Constitution, through peaceful means. They maintain that there is only one appropriate demand: general elections. Is this a realistic prospect? In our opinion, a civilian government is unlikely unless there is mass pressure on the streets or a new turn of events on the external front. A voluntary transfer of power by the generals can virtually be excluded.

There is now more than a simple political reason for the army's desire to remain in power—though that remains a fundamental factor. The officer corps is also the recipient of considerable largesse in the shape of bribes, foreign currency, patronage rights, etc. There is, of course, a hierarchy of corruption with a general making more money than a cap tain. But the officers as a whole are reputed to be contented with their lot. The perquisites of power are now

their privilege. Moreover, a layer of these officers have been trained at CIA and DIA (Defence Intelligence Agency) centres in the United States and are aware of what is expected of them in emergencies. The Pakistani army today is a mercenary force in every sense of the word: soldiers and officers are regularly sold to the Gulf states and Saudi Arabia; the USA maintains its network of agents and informers; and since 1977, martial law has provided ample bounty for the executioners of the elected Prime Minister. Such an army has no reason to relinquish political power. It is true that the longer it stays in office, the more advanced is the crisis of legitimacy. But that is not how the high command views the situation.

If it is utopian to expect (as all the country's political parties do) the generals voluntarily to quit the state, what then can be done? Is terrorism (dignified by the phrase 'armed struggle') the answer? We think not. Terrorism is, after all, not a newcomer to the subcontinent. There was an active and vigorous terrorist move-Punjah and Bengal in the ment in Twenties. The Chittagong armoury raid, with the trial and hanging of the legendary Bhagat Singh, forms part of South Asian folklore. What is recalled less often is that it was a miserable failure, as Bhagat Singh in his prison cell understood better than most. The question of terrorism is no abstract one today. Al-Zulfigar (based in Kabul and under the political direction of Murtaza Bhu tto, eldest son of the executed political leader) has claimed credit for the hijacking of a Pakistan International Airlines plane, which secured the release of some dozens of political prisoners. A reactionary politician has been shot dead in Lahore. On 7 February 1982, an Al-Zulfigar squad fired a SAM-7 missile at a plane carrying General Zia soon after it had taken off from Islamabad, but the missile narrowly missed its target:repression inside the country increased. Other acts of sabotage have been carried out in the Frontier province.

When Lenin described a terrorist as a 'liberal with a bomb,' he was not being facetious. Terrorism is the most dramatic form of pressure-politics. The perpetrators of terrorist acts believe that, by heroic actions, they can accomplish change over the



heads of the masses. Terrorism is apolitical, precisely because it ignores the level of mass consciousness. It seeks in vain to substitute for the masses; it seeks in vain to arouse them, independently of the objective conditions that prevail in the country. In this respect, terrorism is the exact opposite of a viable strategy of protracted armed struggle. For the latter can only be successful where it is based on the support of the people: the Cuban, Vietnamese, Yugoslav, Chinese or Nicaraguan revolutions, the French and Italian resistance movements during the Second World War—these are all examples of a protracted struggle with popular support. The gigantic insurrection that overthrew the Shah of Iranand in the process severely dented the Iranian army, the strongest and best-equipped force in the regionrevealed the enormous capacities of the masses, for whose mobilization there is no substitute. The activities of Al-Zulfiqar, by contrast, have so far not seriously damaged the regime, but rather provided a pretext for intensifying repression at home.

The only effective basis for overthrowing the military regime could be a mass movement repeating in more difficult circumstances what it accomplished in 1968-69. The task today, therefore, is the political arming of the masses, so that at the right moment they can both acquire and utilise weapons to defend themselves. It is worth bearing in mind Trotsky's powerful and evocative description of a fighter: "What distinguishes a revolutionary is not his ability to kill, but his readiness to die." It is only when the masses are ready to die (as they were in 1968-69) that the army regime will fall. The time-scale or pattern of such a movement cannot be predicted with certainty. Nor can one point to the particular spark which might ignite a large-scale revolt. What can be stated is that this regime is, without doubt, the most unpopular administration in even Pakistan's chequered history. The hour of reckoning, in historical terms, cannot be all that distant.

Military rule has suffocated politics and society in general. However, it is worth stressing in particular that the oppression suffered by political prisoners is also now the daily diet of all Pakistan's women, for whom life itself is a prison, the Islamic code having reduced them (after the limited gains of the preceding decade) to ciphers and objects. Puritanism of this variety in fact seeks to conceal the sexual misery of everyday urban life (rural areas are marginally less oppressive in this regard). It is a remarkable feature of Pakistani cities that sexual tensions are always high: their victims are mainly women, but young boys are also a frequent target of repressed minds and bodies. In its own peculiar way the current regime, based as it is on

coercion, backed by a competing network of intelligence agencies, has concentrated brutality on more sections of the population than its predecessors.

Despite all this, the state will not disintegrate of its own accord. There is no reason why, in the absence of foreign intervention or an indigenous uprising, the army cannot continue to maintain an Islamic banana republic in South Asia for another decade or more. This grim prospect remains a distinct possibility. The situation on Pakistan's borders, however, is such that the survival of the military regime depends, to a certain extent, on a stabilisation of politics in Iran and Afghanistan. This is unlikely. The nightmare that haunts the generals in Islamabad is that changes abroad could spark off dissent at home. The army is only too keenly aware of the fragility of the state over whose destiny it now presides. The corps commanders realise full well that they are not popular. They know their regime cannot survive simply on American military aid. Aware that meeting new challenges at home by renewed bouts of repression further weakens their hold, they do not see a serious alternative. Any civilian government would have to recognise the army as a permanent force in the political life of the country. Yet any political party which agreed to that would

sign its own death warrant. Ironically, the survival of Pakistan as a state today does not depend on vested interests or the armed forces. Only a thoroughgoing social transformation and the institutionalisation of democracy, together with the disbandment of the mercenary army, could offer Pakistan a future. This is the supreme paradox: those who have made religion into the organising cement of the state are no longer capable of holding it together; those who, by changing its very character, could maintain it are weak, dispirited and demoralised. The controlled optimism of the subcontinent's greatest living poet, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, provides a suitable epitaph:

Only a few days, dear one, a few days more,

Here in oppression's shadows condemned to breathe,

Still for a while we must suffer, and weep, and endure

What our forefathers, not our own faults, bequeath— Fettered limbs, our feelings

held on a chain,

Minds in bondage, and words each watched and set down;

Courage still nerves us, or how should we still live on,

Now when existence is only a

beggar's gown Tattered and patched every

hour with new rags of pain? Yes, but to tyranny not many

hours are left now;

Patience, few hours of complaint are left us to bear.

Western Sahara: Conflicting super-power interests

panish West Africa, now known as the Western Sahara, is bounded on the west by the Atlantic Ocean, north by Morocco, and east and south by Mauritania. In 1975, King Hassan II of Morocco led 300,000 unarmed subjects in a march across the border into the disputed area of Spanish Sahara which the Moroccans have claimed since pre-colonial times. These tactics worked; Spain withdrew from the colony leaving the northern two-thirds to Morocco and the remaining third to Mauritania. This decision did not suit the 100,000 nomad inhabitants who banded together to form the Polisario Front which took up arms to fight for the independence of the country.

In 1979, Mauritania renounced its claims, but everyone in Morocco, even the Socialist Party which is' being kept out of the ruling coalition through which the King rules the country, believes that the 2,60,000 square kr. of desert moonscape belongs to Morocco and that the country should spare no effort to retain the territory. Thus, though the King could not afford it, for him to pull out would have meant losing his crown. Many, therefore, believed that the 300year old Moroccan monarchy was finished anyway. But the Moroccans adopted a clever defensive plan. Realising that it was militarily impossible and economically pointless to cling to desert wasteland that no one could use, they concentrated their efforts in the north-western strip which they term "useful Sahara"; this contains the main towns and rich phosphate mines.

In order to protect its claim over "useful Sahara", the Moroccans have excavated a trench and built a sand wall two meters high, three meters thick and some 560 km long, from east to west. The wall is dotted, at intervals of about two km. by bunkers protected with barbedwire, land mines and electronic surveillance devices capable of detecting movement 50 km away. These bunkers are occupied by about five to eight men. About 10 km behind this wall, small forts have been built all along the obstacle at 50 km intervals. Each of these strong points is manned by about 100 men who provide back-up support to the wall. Battalion strength reserves (1000 men) are located further in depth as support for the fortresses. Thus, about half of



Lt Gen. E. A. VAS (Retd)

Morocco's 140,000 strong army is on duty at the wall. Morocco gets its arms from the US which regards King Hassan as one of its best Arab friends.

The Polisario Front has an army of 10,000 guerrillas who are being supported by Algeria and Libya. The Polisario, who today control 90 per cent of their land, proclaim: "We are waging a struggle for national liberation, so how can we lose?" But it is apparent that Morocco's tactics have changed the nature of the war and have forced Polisario guerrillas to adopt classical tactics for which they are neither trained nor suited. The war has, therefore, entered an undecisive stage-a military stalemate. It looks as if the fate of the region will be decided not on the battlefield but in the corridors of political power. The question has been discussed at the United Nations, the World Court and Organisation of African Unity (OAU) without throwing up an acceptable solution. Morocco's claim is based on tradition. The Polisario says that Morocco's post-1975 occupation of the

Morocco's tactics have changed the nature of the war and have forced the Polisario guerrillas to adopt classical factics for which they are neither trained nor suited. The war has, therefore, entered an undecisive stage—a military stalemate. It looks as if the fate of the region will be decided not on the battlefield but in the corridors of political power.

area is a projection of its expansionist policy. Morocco holds the view that the main Polisario base is located at Tindouf in Algeria which is backing the Polisario because it wants to set up a puppet regime in the area to gain access to the Atlantic Ocean; Libya is helping the guerrillas with money and Sovietmade arms to destabilise the region. Morocco does not recognise the Polisario and insists on discussing a cease-fire only with Algeria. The Polisario will not talk peace until its status as the representative of the people of Western Sahara is recognised. Meanwhile, King Hassan offered to hold a referendum. The OAU has appointed a seven-nation Implementation Committee which is attempting to organise a cease-fire and referendum with UN help. But its efforts are stalled as they try to find answers to the questions: How is the referendum to be conducted? Who will have the right to vote?

Meanwhile, a large number of OAU nations have already recognised the Polisario and the Saharwi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) it has set up. Morocco was upset when the OAU Ministerial Council decided in Addis Ababa in February 1982, to admit SADR to its meetings. Morocco warned of splitting the OAU unless the African heads of state undid the Addis Ababa decision and it launched a massive diplomatic drive to persuade 19 member states to withdraw from the August 1982 OAU summit meeting, proclaiming that it was not authorised to admit SADR. The meeting had to be cancelled for

lack of a quorum.

The war is costing Morocco 10 lakh rupees a day—a price that a nation without oil money cannot afford. But Saudi money and US arms enable Morocco to carry on the struggle. King Hassan knows that he cannot afford to be complacent about socio-economic problems. The war, on which there is presently a national enthusiasm, has pushed many questions of internal reform under the carpet, but for how long is debateable. Meanwhile, Morocco has stepped up its diplomatic efforts in the Non-aligned Movement where the Polisario, backed by Algeria, is campaigning for support. India, which is keen to improve its relations both with Algeria and Morocco, is likely to tread a cautious path and remain "neutral" in this dispute, leaving it to the OAU to resolve the problem.

ooms are being sold in Delhi for half their declared prices; one doesn't really need to be very lucky to pick up a room at one of the five-star hotels for barely Rs 140 with full board. At the new Taj Palace you can pay Rs 350 for a room which would have otherwise cost you Rs 700 plus. The same is true of the Maurya Sheraton. Even the stolid ITDC has been giving out double rooms at the Ashok for Rs 520 each. As for the luxurious Samrat, the Russians recently paid a measly Rs 260 per head with full board at this hotel: the deal was made through the official Soviet travel agency, Intourist.

The war of cuts in Delhi's hotel industry is a result of the Asiad construction boom; rooms are now available in abundance, while the flow of foreign visitors to the capital has remained alarmingly stagnant. According to former director general of tourism, Mr Somnath Chib, "In 1977 the growth rate of foreign tourists (in India) was as much as 22 per cent. It began to fall the following year and came down to 2.2 per cent in 1979. During the next two years, it remained at a stagnant three per cent. In 1982, it had fallen to .2 per cent." It is unlikely that the government gave any thought to these figures when, with a wave of the magic wand, it sanctioned 3,500 rooms-all for that single fortnight in November 1982 when the Asiad was held. Public financing institutions and banks

promptly joined the bandwagon by providing almost Rs 250 crores to enterprising hoteliers. The result: the number of five-star rooms in the capital was raised from 2,500 to 3,400. And like the Emergency, the Asiad ensured swift and organised implementation of the project. All kinds of facilities were provided to the hoteliers who did not have to go through the normal, obstacle-ridden bureaucratic procedures.

Fortunately, many of these projects are yet to be completed. Twenty-five per cent of the 3,500 rooms which were sanctioned under the Asiad banner are not ready. This is perhaps a boon for the hotel industry in Delhi because otherwise the excess of hotel rooms would have further aggravated the situation. The incomplete hotels are: Mr Charanjit Singh's Meridian (425 rooms, on Raisina Road), Mr Swraj Paul's Park (231 rooms, on Parliament Street), and Mr Sagar Suri's Bharat (500 rooms). There are many in the hotel industry who fear that these hotels will never be completed or that they might be converted into commercial centres, shopping arcades, or eventually declared insolvent properties and auctioned by the government. (Mr Suri's Bharat Hotel, however, was not quite an Asiad project: it was proposed in the mid-Seventies.)

The Asiad fever did not grip the business community alone. The government also went on a wild spending spree, furiously constructing hotels as if all the cement in the

SPECIAL REPORT

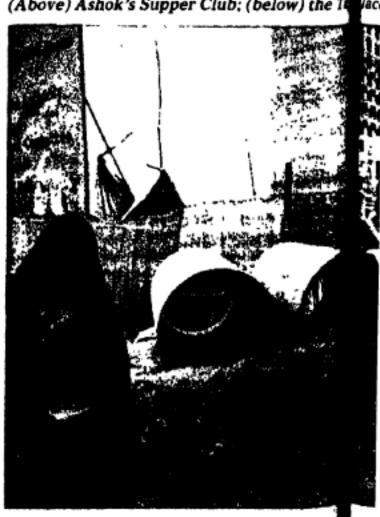
Delhi's five

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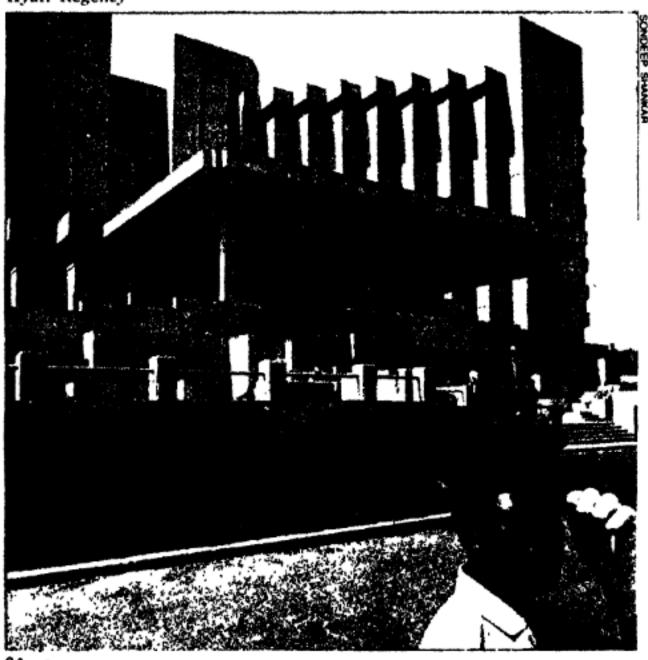
With occupancy rates in Delhi's ve which had come up during be future lies ahead of Delhi's hot er hotels are now undercutting to effort to we co



(Above) Ashok's Supper Club; (below) the 14



Hyatt Regency



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elhi' ve-star hotels—a number of ing 🜬 Asiad—plummeting, a dismal hot ers. MADHU JAIN reports how uttin each other in a desperate w customers.



lace u**nde**r construction



world was running out. The India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) built its super-deluxe Samrat with 300 rooms (to be converted to 368) right next to the Ashok at a cost of Rs 18 crores. Then came the Rs eight-crore Kanishka in the heart of the city (it was planned as a four-star outfit, but later elevated to a fivestar, cost-efficient hotel), and the Rs four-crore Ashok Yatri Niwas next to it. However, both these hotels were in the pipeline long before the Asiad.

Air India built its 416-room Centaur Hotel at the Palam airport wresting in the bargain the Air India business from Ashok, which was almost 100 rooms a day. The Haryana government, not wanting to be left behind, built its Raj Hans at

Suraj Kund.

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) built its 300-room hotel next to the Indraprastha stadium. The shell of this hotel is now ready, and it looks like a part of a ghost town from which the inhabitants have long fled. Bids were sent in for this hotel, but DDA considered them unsuitable. The New Delhi Municipal Committee (NDMC) wanted to be part of the bandwagon as well. The youth hostel it built on Baird Road, ostensibly for the Asian Games, is to be converted into a hotel. It has been sold twice over since. The NDMC also has a 55-room hold in Ashok Yatri Niwas.

The other private enterprise projects related to Asiad are: Siddharta Continental (156 rooms) in Vasant

Vihar (Jai Prakash Associates, with most of the money coming from construction business in West Asia) and Surya Sofitel (258 rooms) in New Friends' Colony. Maurya Sheraton has also added 22 rooms. Up came as well the Taj Mahal Palace (500 rooms) almost as it were, stepping on the toes of Maurya Sheraton. Next came the Asian Hotel's Hyatt Regency with 588 rooms which is expected to open its imperial doors at the end of this month and is sending a chill lown many a hotelier's spine. The dyatt chain's reputation has offset some of the unflattering publicity it received last year regarding its sources of finance from abroad.

What is worrying many people in the hotel industry is the glut of new hotel rooms in the capital without an adequate supply of customers (even airlines like British Airways and Pan Am are economising and increasing their turnrounds reducing, thereby, the number of nights in Delhi). According to Alan Fernandes, vicepresident, Oberoi Intercontinental. "Hotels are now doing what the airlines were doing. The airlines went broke only because of undercutting. You cannot sell something worth Rs 100 for half that amount forever and get away with it. Sooner or later you go broke. That is simple arithmetic..." Most of the pundits of the hotel business like Mr S.N. Chib feel that the situation will not stabilise for another five years. Undercutting is not the only grim part of the future scenario. Most of the hotels





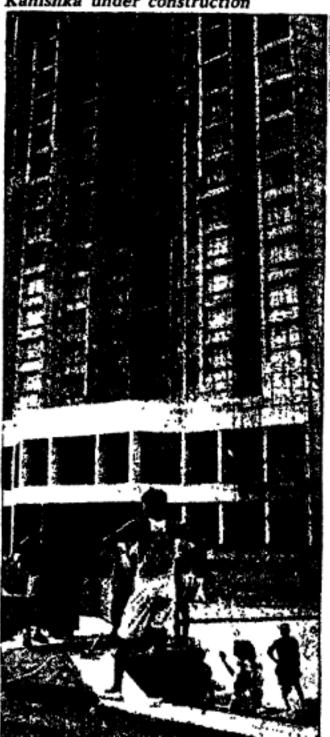
The Surya Sofitel: Gulf money and wasted splendour

built especially for the Asian Games have a mountain-load of debt to be repaid. For instance Hyatt Hotel which is expected to open at the end of May 1983, has cost about Rs 40 crores to build; the interest for the total investment amounts to over Rs 1,50,000 a day. "In this business, it is like a taxi at a red-light. The metre keeps ticking," says a hotelier who believes that the new hotels will have to have an occupancy rate of over 62 per cent to break even. According to Mr Charanjit Singh of Meridian Hotel, "At 65 per cent occupancy, the hotelier will have to sell a room at over Rs 1,200 a day to break even."

There are rumours in the market that Mr Charanjit Singh has sold Meridian to people who own a sizeable amount of prize real estate in Bombay for their Senator chain of hotels. It is also being said that Siddharta Hotel in Rajendra Place (owned by Jai Prakash Associates who also own the other Siddharta Hotel) has been sold to somebody closely associated with the ITC group.

There were seven applications for loans to the Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFDC) in February 1981. Of these only one was rejected: Apeejay's application put forward by Mr Swraj Paul's two brothers, Stya Paul and Jit Paul (the guarantees for the 33 per cent loans were not shown or the letters of credit given, according to one of the members of the loan-giving committee).

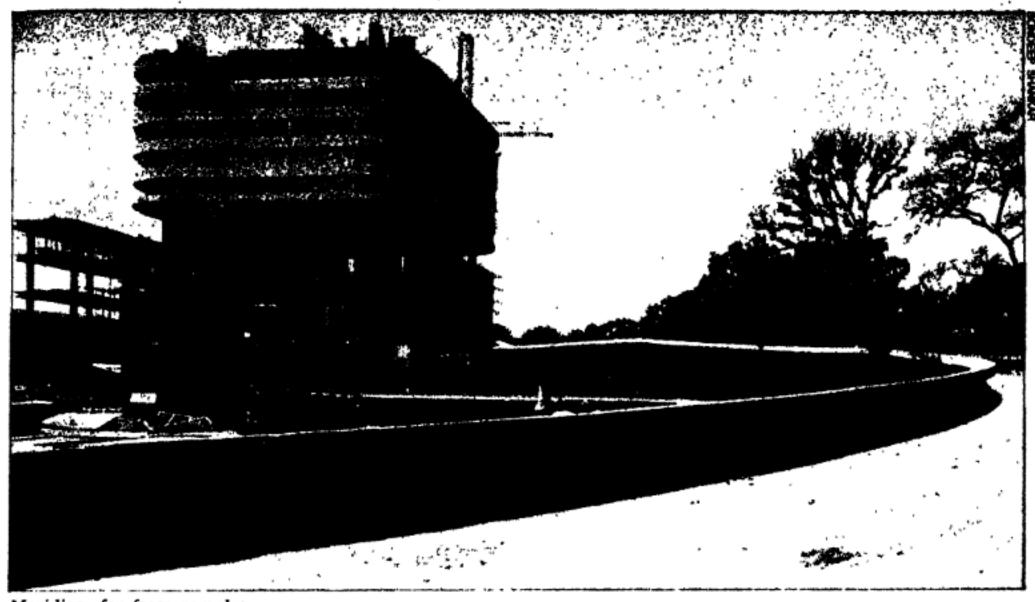
Kanishka under construction



Loans were given to Air India for Centaur, to ITDC for Samrat, Jai Prakash Associates for Siddharta Continental, to Surya Sofitel, to Mr Charanjit Singh for Meridian, and to Mr Sagar Suri, for Bharat Hotel. The Taj Mahal Palace built at the cost of about Rs 35 crores, did not apply for a loan because the hotel was being built on DDA land and it belongs to NDMC.

What is likely to upset the applecart for the hoteliers, are the high interest rates. Normally, IFDC used to give loans at an interest rate of nine per cent for hotels. This time the interest rate is as much as 14 per cent. Moreover, IFDC decided to loan only a third of the total cost. Earlier it used to advance two-thirds of the cost. Consequently, hoteliers had to turn to the market where interest rates vary from 16 to 18 per cent annually. While hiking up the interest rates, the government, in its keenness to transform Delhi into a five-star city, opened the previouslyclosed doors to foreign investment in hotels. In mid-1980 a government directive established a new formula for the hotel industry (given nonpriority status for years): foreign investment upto 30 per cent was allowed. But the oil-exporting countries, particularly those from West Asia, were allowed to invest upto 40 per cent.

Interestingly enough, Yuan Tripp, one of the pioneers of the American international airline, Pan Am, came to India to ask the then



Meridian: far from complete

Prime Minister Mr Morarji Desai, whether Pan Am could invest in hotels here. Mr Desai predictably said "no." In fact, there was also a move to scrap the plan for franchise with international hotel chains when Mr Charan Singh was the Prime Minister.

Tow foreign investors can, in addi-N tion, advance over 50 per cent in loans. It is learnt that the Galadharis are keen on investing in a hotel in Delhi. A few Indian expatriates in Uganda as well as some in Hong Kong want to invest in hotels in Delhi. Says Mr Dave, one of the rare optimists in the tourism trade: "Hotel profitability increases as inflation grows...Delhi is becoming an internationally important city. Everybody wants a piece of real estate here." According to Mr Chib, Asiad changed all kinds of rules. "For 25 years I have criticised the works ministry for not allowing hotels in residential areas. Plots for hotels were given around Dhaula Kuan during the first master plan. Now there are three new plots in the heart of the city: the Meridian, Park Hotel, and Bharat." (Interestingly enough, all three "goldmine" locations belong to those who have been close to the Congress-I.)

Other kinds of rules were also bent, if not broken. The Urban Arts Council initially objected to the Swraj Paul family's hotel plans on Parliament Street. The hotel would cast a shadow on Jantar Mantar located opposite the proposed site and lead astray the ancient astronomical figurations. The Arts Council

had recommended a reduction in the height of the hotel. Eventually, it was gently persuaded to abandon its protest.

The voluminous report of the IFDC loan-giving committee on the finances of the promoters who had applied for loans, was also quite revealing. It is reliably learnt that ten out of the 11 companies belonging to Mr Charanjit Singh were losing money. Pure Drinks, the one winning company, did not cover up the losses of the others. It seems that Mr Singh had mortgaged some of his Bombay assets to build the hotel which is yet to be completed. It is now being said that Jai Prakash Associates has also begun to lose money in Kuwait—prompting them to sell their hotel in Rajendra Place. They were supposed to have already deposited Rs 20 crores, ten per cent of the capital they had. The same is being said about Surya Sofitel (some of the money invested here was also from West Asia; two of its directors, Mr and Mrs Suri have been changed recently.

The gloom on the hotel scene is particularly evident from the smaller hotels. It is now not only a question of the survival of the fittest, but of those with other interests, or those with the government behind them. Hotels belonging to ITC or Tatas (both of whom have other industries to tide them over the crisis) will survive. The others might not. Another ploy is, of course, to delay the completion of hotels (loans are advanced in stages) until the market picks up.

Other south-east Asian cities like Bangkok, Manila and Singapore, particularly Manila, also had their share of problems: fourteen hotels were built in 1976 with disastrous financial consequences. In fact, it was said that prostitution and massage parlours were introducea, with the knowledge of the government officials, to bring in the coveted Japanese tourists. "You could bargain for rooms and get the lowest prices imaginable," says a hotelier. But according to Mr Chib, after the building spree a ban was placed on new constructions in Bangkok until 1982.

Meanwhile, until the house is set in order, hoteliers continue to rack their brains to find methods of enticing customers. ITDC will probably try and corner the market of Indians in South Africa, and of Indian expatriates in the rest of Africa. It is also trying to promote itself in the USSR and West Asia. It has even devised special package tours for the French at \$26 a day which are tailormade to fit in with the amount of money President Mitterrand has allowed his compatriots to take out of France. The Russians also insist on special deals. In 1983, Intourist booked its clients in the Qutb, Kanishka, Imperial and Maidens. 1984 has them in the Taj Palace, Hyatt Regency, Kanishka, Samrat, Outb and Claridges. In 1982, it was Ranjit Hotel and Maidens. Says a hotelier: "Because of this glut, we are now subsidising the Russian worker's holiday..."

Masters of the Game

There was a time when the way to riches was to set up new industries or expand the existing ones. But today's entrepreneurs have found a shorter and a cheaper way to achieve this: buy shares in the stockmarket and get onto the saddle through powerful political mentors.

TOOSHAR PANDIT with reports from KEWAL VARMA in Delhi, RAJNI BAKSHI in Bombay, ANITA PRATAP in Madras and AMALENDU BOSE in Calcutta takes stock of the new trend and the people who have set it.

his is a story which tackles a question close to many hearts: is there an easy, foolproof way to make a fortune outside the luck of premium bonds or the state lotteries? The answer is: yes. If you have some money, say around Rs 10 crores, what you must do to get richer is to invest it in any of the blue chip companies. The older the company, the greater the return. For the sake of an illustration, let us imagine that your choice is DCM. With the amount of money you have, you can buy about 12,00,000 shares at the ruling market price (which is

now Rs 80). This is about 15 per cent 🛊 of DCM's entire stock of 80,00,000 \$ shares. If you have 🕏 the right political connections you are assured of the support of the financial institutions holding about 42 per cent of the company's stock. And the company is yours for the asking. For, the promoters of the company or their descendants who run and manage it now, do not hold more than 15 per cent of the company's shares and so they must make

reality the value of real estate has been going up. So the actual worth of DCM's assets is much more than what the books show. And once you take over the management of the company, and if you want your investment back immediately, you simply have to sell some of DCM's real estate holdings. You invest that money to buy yet another company. And DCM is yours for a song. Indeed, if you can play your cards well, you will soon have several companies under your thumb—and almost at no cost.

Your trump card, is of course, your political connections, for with-

managed by West Bengal industrialist Sir Biren Mukherjee. However, after Mr Goenka had bought IISCO shares worth about Rs 12 crores, the politicians deserted him as Mrs Gandhi turned a radical. Having sunk such a lot of money Mr Goenka had no option but to hold on to them hoping that the tide would again turn in his favour. Sir Biren Mukherjee, however, skipped dividends for four years making Mr Goenka pay huge interests on the money he had borrowed to purchase the shares and there was no return for the investment. Finally, IISCO was nationalised and Mr Goenka lost.



room for you to Ramnath Goenka: costly gamble

G.D. Birla: pastmaster

And for an investment of Rs 10 crores what are you getting? You are getting an industrial empire whose annual turnover is over Rs 400 crores and its assets, according to the company's books, are worth more than Rs 150 crores. The book value of the assets, however, does not reflect the reality. Like all old companies, DCM's assets include massive real estate holdings in various places including Delhi. In the books the values of these assets have been depreciating over the years but in

out the support of the financial institutions and, more important the patronage of the powers that be, your money is sunk. Newspaper magnate Ramnath Goenka learnt this years ago, literally, by paying through his nose. Banking on political patronage of some influential south Indian politicians including K. Kamaraj, T.T. Krishnamachari, C. Subramaniam and T.A.Pai, Ramnath Goenka mounted a speculative attack in 1969 on Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO), owned and

So that's the game and the name of the game is: takeover. Taking over companies is less expensive and the returns are almost instant. You would not have gone very far with your Rs 10 crores if you had thought of investing it to build up a new industry—land and construction would probably have cost you more. No wonder, more and more people with that kind of money are raiding more and more companies to get rich quickly—and cheaply. Their targets are

always the companies which are doing well or expected to do well. Preferably, companies having large assets, especially in real estate holdings and accumulated reserve; where the families running them are divided among themselves and account for a very low percentage of the total stock holding; and, where the financial institutions are holding large stocks and as in the case of DCM or Escorts have a decisive say. That precisely is what the expatriate businessman Swraj Paul is aiming at.

The game is as old as money itself and the Birlas are among the pastmasters. Much of the spate of takeovers in the Fifties, when British companies began disinvesting are attributed to the Birlas. In all fairness, however, it must be said that by and large the Birlas invested more in building up new industries than in acquiring them. Until recently, the Tatas have never favoured any large scale speculative bidding for shares. One person who stands head above shoulders among the pastniasters in this game is Calcutta businessman, Haridas Mundhra who, starting from scratch, acquired a massive empire in ten years since independence, by raiding and winning over control of one company after another till he was caught in his own net and is now devastated. He first bought Osler and then added to his acquisitions, the Brahmaputra Tea Company, a sterling company, the Jessops of Calcutta, Richardson and Crudas of Bombay and finally the BIC. His game was up when it was discovered that apart from using the funds of one company to buy the shares of another, he had sold the same shares many times, duping among others the Life Insurance Corporation. Indeed, Haridas Mundhra is a classic example of how one can get rich without investing.

Of late, with capital more scarce and the cost of setting up new industries escalating, a number of companies have fallen prey to the predators on the prowl. Among the victims during last ten years or so are at least nine major corporations with combined sales of over Rs 600 crores. The brewery baron from the Deccan, Vittal Mallya, (see box) of course, takes the cake. Starting from scratch 30 years ago, he now controls many big names in industry: United Breweries, McDowell and Company, Cadbury, Indian Sewing Machines, British Paints, Malayalam Plantation, Kissan products, Hoechest Pharmaceuticals, Herbertson Carew and Company, Mysore Electro-Chemical Works, Hindustan Polymers, Phipson and Company, and Mysore Wire Products.

Other recent successful raids: the Kapadias taking over National Rayon; the Modis gaining control of Philip Morris International's Godfrey Phillips and tyre-making giant Firestone's Bombay Tyres International, and, Nusli Wadia of Bombay Dyeing acquiring Bombay Burmah. But among the current crop of predators the one who is feared the most in the sharemarkets is the Calcutta businessman Rama Prasad Goenka who has been claiming one victim after another since he acquired Ceat Tyres some two years ago having bought the foreign equity from the parent Italian company Ceat Pneumatici (see R.P. GOENKA: Stalking the Market). In fact, the Goenkas have been in the game for quite some time with R.P. Goenka's

VITTAL MALLYA

The King of Kings

Pew outside the industrial circles have heard of him; even fewer have had the opportunity of seeing him. Yet, the products his companies manufacture—and there are more than a few of them-are used in most households in this country. This Indian Howard Hughes, who fights shy of publicity, is the 57year old Mangalorean business magnate Vittal Mallya. If his name does not sound familiar, his products definitely do: McDowell's whisky, Carew's gin, Kissan squashes, Dipy's food products (remember that familiar slogan 'Yipee, it's Dipy's') and a whole range of processed foods.

Starting from a modest beginning (he was the son of an army doctor), over a period of about 30 years, Vittal Mallya has become the uncrowned king of the Indian liquor trade (he beat Mohan Meakins, the reigning lord of the liquor industry, when in 1981 his companies produced 38.3 million litres of beer and 20 litres million of liquor) and

has today about 30 companies tucked away under his belt, ranging from liquor to food products to medicines.

Yet, when he was in school (he is a product of Doon School), few would have guessed that the young Vittal Mallya would one day become one of the most successful businessmen in the country. Soft spoken and well mannered, even as a young boy Mallya used to ponder over balance sheets while his fellow students buried themselves in history, geography and mathematics. The results were predictable: while he failed to impress in school, he acquired his first company, McDowell, at the age of 24 and two years later United Breweries was in his kitty. And ever since then Mallya (who shifted to Bangalore in 1952) has been snapping up one company after the other, spreading his liquor network (all through a process of acquiring companies) to Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Bihar.

But, in order to control the liquor trade, Mallya realised two things: first, he had to control the distribution system and second, he had to have easy and cheap access to raw materials. For the first, he acquired Phipsons in the early Sixties and followed it up a decade later by taking over Herbertsons, another distribution firm. And to ensure a steady supply of raw materials he bought two acres of land in Kashmir to produce hops, the most vital ingredient in the making of beer, and today he distributes hop seedlings to farmers in Kashmir and in turn buys up all their produce, preempting the chances of any other competitor from reaching for the hops so necessary in the liquor trade.

What is the key to Mallya's suc-

cess? The answer. according to his associates, is simple: the art of studying balance sheets and knowing which company to acquire and when. It is little wonder then. that Mallya has come to be known as one of the most successful takeover kings in the country. For instance, in the mid-Seventies, when there was a prohibition drive



Vittal Mallya: success story

and slump in the liquor market, Mallya easily picked up a number of breweries like Premier, Jupiter, Punjab and Indo-Lowerbrau. Again, Mallya is known to buy up sick companies at low prices and nurse them back to health (example: Dipy's, a division of Herbertson), till they become flourishing business concerns. Again, in collaboration with foreign concerns, he has set up companies in India and then gradually acquired controlling shares in them. For instance, he set up Hoechst Pharmaceuticals jointly with Hoechst AG of Germany and then came to acquire controlling shares in the company and became its chairman. Again, with the help of Hoechst AG, which had acquired the Berger group, the parent company of British Paints, he became the chairman of British Paints in 1978.

Mallya's next target is the soft drinks market which he hopes to capture with a wide range of drinks of which Thril, a cola based drink and Sprint a lemon based drink, are already being marketed.

A Special Correspondent

father, the late Mr K.P. Goenka, setting the trend. K.P. Goenka started off by acquiring Octavius Steel and then bagged Duncan Brothers. After that his three sons teamed up with him to gain control of B.N. Ellias & Company which had among its holdings the National Tobacco Company, makers of cigarettes. Following a split in the family, R.P. Goenka's brother G.P. Goenka, now on his own, has acquired the laminates giant Bakelite Hylam. The art, evidently, runs through the Goenka family. And if R.P. Goenka did not succeed in his latest bid to acquire the old and venerable Premier Automobiles Limited (PAL) it was not because he lacked resources or the wits to match his rivals—indeed he, has more than enough of both—but because he had apparently infringed the inviolable code of Indian industrialists which expects the predators to spare larger

preys. The best recent example of how the game is won—and lost—is cigerette giant ITC's battle for the control of Madras-based India Cements Limited (ICL). Founded in 1946 by the late T.S. Narayanaswamy and Shankaralinga Iyer, ICL has two units, one in Salem and the other in Tirunelveli, producing about 1.7 million tonnes of cement annually. Soon after Mri Narayanas. wamy's death, K. S. Narayanan, the elder son of Mr lyer, took over as the chairman and managing director of the company. Mr Narayanaswamy's son, N. Srinivasan, who was then studying in Kerala was brought in as the general manager and later appointed the joint managing director. Trouble was brewing in the company's board; the new appointees were vulnerable since 51 per cent of the entire share holdings of ICL were in the hands of financial institutions and banks. Of the total 98 lakh shares of ICL, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) held 24,35,000, Unit Trust of India (UTI) 12,70,000, General Insurance Corporation (GIC) 10,50,000, and the nationalised banks 1,45,000. The Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has also lent substantial sums to the company. The gradually developing rift between the sons of the original promoters of ICL climaxed in late 1981 when the banks and financial institutions wanted to sell off their holdings in a bid to offload the shares to the promoters, but K. S. Narayanan and N. Srinivasan fighting amongst themselves could not come to an agreement regarding the purchase of the shares.

About two years ago, the Duncan group of the Goenkas had shown some interest in the shares of ICL. The group had offered to pay Rs seven extra per share but the bid was somehow scuttled. The real controversy, however, started in September 1982, when on the advice of the chairman of the IDBI, Mr N. N. 40

Pai, the financial institutions proceeded to sell over three-fifths of their 51 per cent shareholdings in ICL to the large Calcutta-based conglomerate, ITC Ltd at six times the face value of the Rs five shares. Morever, the deal was about to come through at a time when N. Srinivasan and his brother, K. S. Raman, had jointly made written offers to buy over 30 per cent of the company's 98 lakh shares of Rs 5 each at par.

ITC's interest in ICL is understandable. The cement industry which was in doldrums started looking up with the announcement of the government's dual pricing policy in February 1982. India Cements in particular, after ending up with a cumulative loss of Rs 3.78 croresin 1980-81, crossed the hump and made a net profit of Rs 9.67 lakhs in 1981-82. Entrenched so far in the process of wet manufacture of cement, the company is now considering a programme of modernisation into the more profitable dry process kilns. A Rs 50-crore investment will not debar ITC from taking over in the context of the prospective larger returns.

The deal was struck behind a veil of secrecy, and it helped both ITC and the financial institutions. The transaction had helped promote ITC's plans of diversification and the financial institutions had earned a good deal of money by disinvesting their shares at a higher rate. However, ITC's corporate conquest was soon caught up in the vortex of a steamy financial and legal controversy. When the non-institutional shareholders of ICL proposed to sell off their shares to the ITC, the latter refused to pay as much as they had paid to the financial institutions. The Madras stock exchange declared that it wanted the ITC, which was about to buy over a controlling portion of India Cements shares, to also purchase an equivalent proportion of shares from minority shareholders so that they were not deprived of their legitimate share of monetary advantage. The stock exchange also sent a communication to the union finance ministry suggesting that the

N.N. Pai: caught in the crossfire



centre formulate a code of conduct for company takeovers. All takeover bids, the communication added, must be publicised to enable minority investors to take advantage of the market prices.

On his part, Mr Srinivasan has dragged the deal to court. He filed a writ petition in the Madras high court challenging the transfer and has obtained an interim injunction staying it. The Company Law Board (CLB) in Delhi has also restrained the transfer of the shares as it is yet to decide whether the board's prior permission was necessary in the deal. Sections 192 and 372 of the Company's Act and sections 20 and 23 of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTP) states that the board's prior permission is necessary if a company wishes to purchase over ten per cent of another company's shares. The ITC's deal comes within the MRTP scope as it was seeking to buy 32.63 per cent of India Cements shares. ITC's contention before the court was that four companies, ITC, Pinnacle Investments Ltd., Summit Investments Ltd., and Sage Investments Ltd., had tendered applications for the transfer of shares with none of them seeking to acquire more than ten per cent of ICL's shares, and not ITC alone. But Srinivasan has countered this argument maintaining that the three companies listed by ITC are in reality wholly-owned subsidiaries of the Indian Tobacco Company. The court intends to wait for the CLB decision before delivering a judg ment in this case. The CLB has been repeatedly delaying its decision on the issue and this has given rise to speculations that ITC may be forced to return its shares.

part from creating a stir in the Astock markets, the India Cements-ITC deal served to highlight the potentially dubious role of financial institutions in the takeover game, since they hold a major part of the shares in most major companies and thus can determine who wins. Among other things the sequence of events in the India Cements deal illustrated how the institutions act specifically on instructions from Delhi. Yet when second rank officers of the financial institutions insist that there is no overt interference from Delhi, they are not lying. Any instructions issued by Delhi are conveyed directly to the chief executive v 10 takes appropriate action. The sirman of IDBI, Mr N. N. Pai's dis sal from his post showed what pens when these signals are eir confused by the bureaucrat or gets carried away by the power enious and exceeds the limited pa ie:ei i within which the Delhi bos uid like him to operate.

Pai's unceremonious departure together with the wild publicity that has accompanied some takeovers has now left the financial institutions in a peculiar position. In many of the companies where the institutions have a bulk holding the prices are better today than they are again likely to be in the near future. Yet, says a prominent Bombay stock broker, the institutions dare not sell to any one at the moment for fear of stirring up yet another hornets' nest.

At the time of Mr Pai's departure, ostensibly a resignation in deference to the new policy of inducting younger people, there was wild speculation in the market about which particular "deal" he was punished for. Was it for the ITC-India Cements deal, the Bombay Dyeing-Bombay Burmah Trading Company deal or the course of events in the Goenka bid at Premier? Speculation about the extent of Delhi's disenchantment with Mr Pai was further fuelled when there were rumours that his house had been raided by either the income-tax department or the CBI. This, however, was quashed when there was no official confirmation from these departments..

Now, months later, top industrial ists who dealt with, paid and were involved in several of the controversial transactions believe that no particular issue was responsible for Mr Pai's fall from power. In the words of one industrialist, Mr Pai had exceeded the limits of his power. But, perhaps, the most accurate analysis is that Mr Pai was the victim of a crossfire between warring factions within the Prime Minister's circle. Mr Pai apparently owes allegiance to Vijay Dhar and had incurred the

wrath of Arun Nehru.

Moreover, as the Premier Automobiles (PAL) case has illustrated, there are different factions within the cabinet, each lobbying for a different party in any such dispute, with Rajiv Gandhi or Mrs Gandhi exercising the final say. After the controversy generated by the ITC deal and the PAL tussle, there was a move within the government to find a scapegoat and the axe fell on Pai. Members of the Walchand family themselves acknowledge they may have been luckier than others are likely to be. Even officials of the institutions who claim to operate without interference in day-to-day affairs by the centre, admit that things are in a flux and the centre's position is unpredictable.

Among local industrialists and investors there is considerable nervousness about recent takeover bids. Very few have the offensive strength of R.P. Goenka and the ability to muster a political defence, displayed by the Walchand group. And much of the nervousness has to do with the certainty that despite their public protestations the financial institutions are making decisions on major bids on an ad hoc basis determined by which way the breeze is blowing

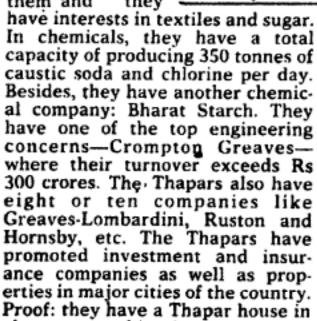
in Delhi.

The Scindia-Thapar war of nerves

The news of the Thapars' buying about two lakh shares of the Scindia Steam Navigation company, sent a tremor through Scindia House where the grand old iron lady, Mrs Sumati Morarjee, presides over the destinies of India's largest shipping company in the private sector. In comparison the Thapars, India's number four among the top 20 business houses in the country own only one ship and their total shareholdings in Scindias as of date do not exceed 2,20,000 shares worth around Rs 20 lakhs: very little since the Scindias have a total capital of Rs 18 crores, a Thapar spokesman told SUNDAY. He also denied that they had purchased four lakhs of shares as was earlier reported.

However, Scindias which has not been doing too well in business considering the slump in the shipping market—did cry wolf, over the

Thapar purchase By all counts the Thapars are a formidable group. The total turnover of the group today is in the vicinity of Rs 18,000 crores. They are at the very top in the paper and glass industry. They were number one in the colliery industry until the industry was nationalised. The Oriental Bank was promoted by them and they



In addition to all this they own one ship through the shipping division of Ballarpur Industry. As the Thapar spokesman said: "We bought shares in Scindias because in the long run we thought it would be profitable to make an entry into

almost every big city.

shipping in this manner. It would not be advisable for us to enter the shipping market at a stage when profits are low and the business was facing a recession." Asked why Thapars would want to make investments in a company that is not doing too well, the spokesman said that Thapars have, in the past, acquired many sick babies and restored them to health. They have nursed companies like Ballarpur Industries and J. G. Glass along with a number of others and made them profitable. Scindia Steam Navigation is apprehensive despite the feelers of peace sent out by the Thapars. The psychological fear is a pervasive one in industrial circles today and this fear psychosis seems to have gripped the Scindias too. A board meeting convened at the end of April decided informally that they should resist any takeover bid by the Thapars. Legal opinion

sought by them gave a boost to their morales for they were told that they were not bound to transfer the shares to the Thapars. In any case, they have two months to decide and the period expires in May. The mood is one of resistance built up by a small clique around the iron lady Mrs Sumati Morarjee.

Thapars, for the record, say that



Sumati Morarji and L.N. Thapar: battle royal

they will not fight the Scindias over the shares. "Our two lakh shares," said a spokesman, "is fleabite and we would not want to spoil our long-standing relationship over this. After all, we have had shares in their company. If they do not transfer the shares then we will sell it back to them or into the market. We are not on a collision course and have never sought to impose ourselves anywhere. We have never asked for a position on the board of the Scindias. It is not in our interest to impose ourselves." However, despite the protestations of the Thapars the fear of takeover remains relevant. It could be an inferiority complex on the part of the Scindias before a formidable potential rival whose only ship could easily be the Trojan horse some time in the future.

Olga Tellis

R.P. GOENKA

Stalking the Market

RAJNI BAKSHI profiles one of the country's foremost predators and examines how he wins—or loses—his battles.

One of the stormiest takeover bids in recent times has been the one that R. P. Goenka made for the Premier Automobile Limited (PAL). Among the industrialists who are today feared in the corridors of the corporate sector and are in a 'takeover' mood, Rama Prasad Goenka is probably the most aggressive.

Son of the late Mr K. P. Goenka, who headed the Duncan Bros group, Rama Prasad, better know as R. P. Goenka pulled his first major coup when he acquired 14 per cent of Ceat Pneumatic's holding in India. Having established a "very good understanding" with the parent Italian company which threw its support behind him, Goenka took over the management of Ceat (India) and moved into its elegant office build ing at Worli, Bombay. The acquisi tion of Ceat, which then had Rs 24 crores in liquid resources, had certain obvious advantages for the ambitious and expansion-oriented Goenka. Soon after taking over Ceat in mid-1982, R. P. Goenka bought about 17 per cent of the shares of Kamani Engineering at a court auction. The internally divided Kamani family, unable to resolve its differences had wound up in court for arbitration of the dispute.

Owing to the family dispute Kamani Engineering was being managed by the financial institutions. R. P. Goenka, therefore, approached the financial institutions for sale of about 40 per cent of the Kamani shares, held by them. After considering the request, the then IDBI chairman, N. N. Pai, turned down R. P. Goenka's request, but agreed to give him a role in the management of the company and made him chairman of the

board. Harsh Vardhan Goenka, R. P. Goenka's son and managing director of Ceat which bought the Kamani shares, insists their role in Kamani is not that of taking over the company since apart from R. P. Goenka's appointment as chairman, no other changes have been made in the professional management of the company. But R. P. Goenka's position as chairman serves the basic purpose of the Goenka s: being the head of the company which is a world leader in power transmission tower construction, with a bulk of its projects located abroad, has opened up broader business vistas before R. P. Goenka and his growing empire.

The rationale behind takeovers, in

R. P. Goenka's own words, is essentially that "expansion by acquisition is a shorter route." And monetary considerations are not the sole guiding criterion in takeovers. Beyond a certain point the power, clout and prestige acquired by holdings in particular companies become the paramount factor. When the company taken over is like the Kamanis where the promoters are in a disarray and financial institutions hold the reigns, few eyebrows are raised when an industrialist with the adequate resources walks in. But it is quite another matter when the company being bid for has a well-entrenched management. So it was that PAL became not just the biggest showdown for R. P. Goenka but for industry at large. At best, R. P. Goenka's



R.P. Goenka: on the prowl

bid to ease his way into PAL controlled by the founding Walchand group, was considered a long shot. But the battle which ensued provided a colourful, illustration of the political manoeuvrings that go into a takeover bid.

On the lookout for companies where the Goenka group could sub stantially improve its holdings and where the management holds an insignificant percentage of the shares, R. P. Goenka's gaze settled on PAL and sometime in September 1982 he began buying its shares. The support rendered to him by the financial institutions in the Kamani deal continued and R. P. Goenka was able to buy some Premier shares from the financial institutions. By the time the Walchand group, headed by Lalchand Hirachand, realised what was

happening, R. P. Goenka had already acquired about four per cent of PAL shares. In itself this was not a significant enough holding to cause panic in the Walchand family but their own holding was very thin and by all indications R. P. Goenka seemed set to continue on the buying spree.

Both R. P. Goenka and Harsh Goenka insist that they had no interest in taking over PAL at that stage and were buying the shares purely for investment purposes. According to one reliable account the Goenkas were also anticipating a split within the Walchand group which would place them in an advantageous position to pick up the spoils of any major dispute that might break out within the Walchand family.

When R. P. Goenka and Vinod Doshi, managing director of PAL and vice-chairman of the Walchand group, met to discuss the issue, R. P. Goenka not only disclaimed having any takeover plans but offered to give his proxies to the Walchand family. The two parties shook hands on an agreement that R. P. Goenka would not buy any more PAL shares or in any way endanger the Walchand interest in the company.

But when the rumours that R. P. Goenka was continuing to buy PAL shares persisted, the Walchand group, through Mrs Sharayu Daftary, past president of the Indian merchants chamber, approached the government at the highest level. Apparently angered by what seemed a breach of promise, R. P. Goenka then proceeded to buy more shares and soon had about eight per cent of the PAL equity in his hands. Given R. P. Goenka's widely acknowledged proximity to the finance minister the Walchand group became increasingly panicky and began to set up a lobby of its own. The support of Maharashtra MPs, and MLAs was enlisted: the contribution of Walchand Hirachand, whose centenary was being celebrated, to Indian industry was repeatedly emphasised. In fact the PAL tussle acquired the dimensions of a test case for the financial institutions.

These institutions, caught between different pressure lobbies, went into a state of confusion. Even as some bureaucrats demanded a statement of policy on the basis of which they could take decisions on this and

other cases, it seemed to most concerned that either way the decision would be made on an ad-hoc basis. Luckily for the Walchand family, by the time their tussle with R. P. Goenka reached a climax, the financial institutions and the government were already under heavy fire for their "secret" deal with ITC to acquire India Cement, a Tamil Nadu company torn by disputes between its two promoters.

The Walchand group also decided to refuse to register R. P. Goenka's shares with the company and declared its intention to fight up to the Supreme Court in case R. P. Goenka filed a suit against them. Innumerable trips to Delhi were made for meetings at the highest level of the government and eventually the financial institutions decided to throw their weight behind the existing management. Once this had been decided, both parties set to work on devising a scheme that would enable R. P. Goenka to make a graceful exit from the tussle. It is at this stage that Rahul Bajaj entered the picture and helped to negotiate a

the settlement: R.P. Goenka sold his enka shares to the Walchand family at mer-cost price plus interest.

By the time the dust settled the Premier tussle had become a firm reminder to all that a company cannot be taken over or saved without direct support from the institutions. It is not sufficient for managements to simply be efficient but also alert and vigilant about any potential infringements. The general view in the stock market is that the Walchands have paid for this negligence through their nose.

'I am not hard headed enough'

R.P. GOENKA tells SUNDAY

Q: Do you agree that takeovers are becoming a popular mode of expansion in the Indian corporate sector?

A: To begin with there are two types of takeovers. In the first type the existing management agrees to sell its holding and management rights to another party. In the second type a bidder acquires substantial interests in a company, more than the existing management and then tries to force the issue in a proxy war. You can't say the same thing about both types of takeovers. In the first type, since both the buyer and seller agree, what is wrong in it? The second type of takeover is a disputable point. It is happening around the world but I will refrain from passing a judgment on this. I don't think that takeovers of the second type have become popular yet—it is a new idea here. In India, the industrialist community is small in number and people keep to themselves. This (takeovers) is new and so people are talking about it.

Q: One of the apprehensions among industrialists appears to be that if takeovers become the order of the day, small companies will be gobbled up by larger groups with greater clout and resources. Is this

fear justifiable?

A: This apprehension in the current context is totally ill-founded. Since financial institutions as a whole have generally substantial interests in most (public) companies and to date the government has not sided with bidders in a well-run company—they have sided with the existing management (for example) India Cement had a lousy track record. Unless you look at it from a narrow angle of regionalism—I don't see anything wrong with it (IDBI's deal with ITC for India Cement).

Q: But what happens when more than one large group is competing for a unit and seeking financial institutions' support to do so? What are the pressures and counterpressures which operate in such a situation?

A: In a competition, one has to win and another has to lose. As regards pulls and counter-pulls—it is my belief that the financial institutions, till today, have been taking a very matured approach. But human beings being what they are, one party may have an edge over the other. Certain marginal advantages or disadvantages (to one party) cannot be discounted But they are of no significant consequence.

Q: But is it not true that Mr N. N. Pai was dismissed from his post as IDBI chairman because of the subjective judgment he employed in various takeover bids which involved the financial institutions?

A: To judge or comment on Mr Pai's departure without knowing the full facts would be wrong. From the press statements (issued at the time of his departure) it came out that Mr Pai wanted to resign in deference to the Prime Minister's announcement that public servants should make way for younger people.

Q: Then, in your view, the role of the financial institutions in takeovers is highly exaggerated and somewhat of a storm in a tea cup?

A: We, in the business community, are subjective people-and I ampart of it. For example, the cement industry had begun to do well so India Cements became an issue. No one has shed tears for Ashok Paper Mills (also sold to ITC as part of a package deal for taking over India Cements). But different people talk to the press complaining about a deal (in this case India Cements) and a vicious cycle leads to a controversy. It is not a storm in a tea cup. It is pure jealousy.

Q: Have the recent acquisitions made by you been part of a broad policy framework? And, if so what is the rationale behind it?

A: We wish to expand within the

means we have available: finance, personnel and expertise. If we have the requirement and a good company is available then we will be quite happy to acquire companies. It is a known fact that expansion by acquisition is a shorter route. At the moment, we are consolidating what we have and if fresh opportunities do arise we will be back in the game. Our eyes and ears are still open but in a more conservative fashion; we have become more selective in picking out our areas of expansion. We are looking for companies where our group can substantially improve the current working and where the management holds an insignificant percentage of the shares.

Q: Are small holdings dangerous for management in the prevailing

climate?

A: Not necessarily. One can live with small holdings provided he is efficient. But the next generation should then be prepared that unless they prove efficient, they may not be in the same position as their fathers were.

Q: Why did you first make a bid for Premier and then back down?

A: We certainly had no desire of taking away the management from the existing owners. We wanted to make our presence felt and improve the working. Then Rahul Bajaj, whom I respect as a man and as a businessman, persuaded me to sell the shares to the Walchand family at cost price plus interest, which I accepted My sons did not fully agree with this decision. My family says that I am not hardheaded enough but I have no regrets

Q: What is your view on the influx of non-resident Indian capital? Do you think the financial institutions will maintain the stand they have taken so far?

A: Yes, I think the financial institutions will continue to take as mature a stand as they have taken till now.

Bombay's video craze

Video proliferation, the horror of the film industry and the delight of the masses, is seriously challenging the prevalent structure of the entertainment industry. Rapid technological advances along with rampant "piracy" of films and music are bringing about changes which may eventually give the masses access to cheaper and more convenient forms of audio visual entertainment. RAJNI BAKSHI says that videos have already established firm roots in India's Hollywood—Bombay.

n many a Bombay *chawl*, the latest films are now being seen by thousands on videos. A complete list of the week's fare, with three shows every day, is sometimes available at the local baniya shop. With a flat rate of about Rs two, patrons are seated, often on the floor, on a first-come-first-serve basis. For the better heeled there are innumerable snack and beer bars where for the cost of a drink and snack they can also see a film on video in air-conditioned comfort, minus the crowds and queues which are an integral part of the cinema hall experience.

If these video "mini-theatres" were isolated to this cosmopolitan metropolis there would be little cause for excitement. But the phenomenon encompasses places like Jalgaon and Jalna. Every week Bombay's film industry circles rejoice over fresh news about court cases filed against the video entrepreneurs by cinema owners, distributors or producers of films. But the better-informed and more candid people from the industry acknowledge that those who think that the tide can be turned through semieffective court cases are living in a fool's paradise. These prophets of doom substantiate their predictions by pointing to the international proliferation of video.

The Western film and network television industry is reeling under the onslaught of competition from video and cable television. Reuter recently reported that in Britain the annual film admissions have almost halved since 1978 and a third of the nation's cinemas have closed down. In the United States, the three television networks are in the throes of an unprecedented crisis of declining audiences, who are seeking greener pastures on cable or "pay" TV and video.

. These developments are common-

ly dismissed as having no relevance to India, where only a miniscule fraction of the total population owns television sets. But India is, in fact, inescapably part of a worldwide trend which is making video hardware and software cheaper and more accessible to the people. "Three years ago people dismissed video elitist entertainment," says Amit Khanna, convener of the Copyright Protection Committee of the Film Producers Council of India. "But it's a mass phenomenon, even in places like Jalgaon and Jalna, where there are only two or three theatres and (new) films are screened months late. Now at the small video theatres you can see a new film the next day (after its release in the big cities)."

In Bombay, India's first cable television hookup is already doing roaring business in posh Cuffe Parade. Operating within the confines of private housing societies, Suresh Nanavati feeds the latest Hindi and English films to his thousands of clients by cables connected to a master control room in one of the buildings. G.P. Sippy, one of Bombay's top producers, is currently fighting a case against this cable network for violation of the copyright laws. Moreover, Nanavati's failure to rapidly duplicate the cable network elsewhere has convinced film industry magnates that the real threat is not from cable television but from video based 'theatres.'

"Within two years, officially, there will be video theatres," predicts S. C. Hira, managing director of Esquire Videos, the first licensed local producers of video cassettes. While Hira looks forward to such developments with visions of fantastic growth for his company, producer Gulshan Rai, mournfully agrees that if the flood of video was not there the cinema tickets could have been raised to Rs 15 (by now)."

Gulshan Rai, a king of the box office, is among those who recognise that video is here to stay and pleads that "let's do it honestly. At the moment, the producer, the distributor, exhibitor and government, all are losing (money)."

The video "theatre" proprietor is,

Mrs M. T. Vaidya: 'The future of film distribution lies in television and videos'

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at the moment, by-passing regulations which govern the operation of cinemas, evading entertainment tax, and in most cases also infringing on the copyrights of film producers and artists. The film industry people's self-righteous pleas for "honesty" are ironical, since the film industry is itself deeply entrenched in the parallel economy. Essentially what Rai and company are demanding is a "cut" of the profits in this new

enterprise of potentials. Video proliferation is primarily a gift of modern technology and international competition between electronics companies which are making video hardware cheaper and more accessible for millions. A video cas sette player (VCP), which does not have recording capability is now available in the USA for 160 dollars According to Amit Khanna, the same machine is available in India for Rs 4000 at sales centres of smuggled goods. Videos are, therefore, not only becoming accessible to the bored, entertainment-starved urban

middle-class but also constitute a



Hira: a threat to the film industry

rapid turnover and quick return investment for the enterprising few who want to set up "theatres" to reach the low-income group which is yet to acquire television sets of their own. This accessibility of video hardware is being matched by a growth of software production units. The National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) already has a functioning video cassette production unit in Madras. At present this unit can transfer over 600 films and produce 30,000 recorded in a year. The NFDC plans to increase the capacity of their video unit to keep pace with demand to produce video cassettes. Last year the legitimate imports of video cassettes alone, amounted to Rs two crores (approximately 1,80,000 cassettes).

S. C. Hira, of Esquire Videos, has already entered into a partnership with producer-distributor B. R. Chopra to transfer films onto video cassettes and produce films and shows exclusively for video. Hovering around these legitimate entrepreneurs are the video "pirates" who pay no copyright dues, taxes or excise duties and reap astronomical

profits.

Though the "pirates" promise to offer stiff competition to the legiti-

Songs for a rupee

While most film industry operators are either denying the growing importance of videos or floundering around in panic, a few are busy laying the foundations for new enterprises which may ermerge as empires in the entertainment industry of tomorrow.

S. C. Hira, managing director of Esquire Video Film Services, is among those who are already in the process of establishing a widespread distribution network for sales and rental of video cassettes. This network, which will operate through established distributors of films, will be used not only to disseminate cassettes of films but programmes made exclusively for video. The possible range of programmes goes from a 30-part series on the Mahabharata to a complete history of the Mughal saga.

Perhaps the most popular scheme up Hira's sleeve is a half-hour cas sette of assorted film songs—Chitrahar on video. Hira claims that these cassettee, which are already in production, will be marketed through distributors to people on a rental basis of Re 1 a day. Even if the retail outlets keep a 100 per cent, or even 200 per cent margin profit, the Chitrahar videos may be available to the general public at Rs two or three per day.

Apart from the video pirates who have already made a serious dent in the UK and the USA market for Indian films, and are now creating havoc in the domestic market, Hira's plan to distribute Esquire videos locally has caused much an-

ger and indignation among film producers. The producers claim that when they sold Esquire the rights to convert and sell their films on video, it was on the condition that the tapes would not be released in the Indian market. Since Hira's production unit was in the Santa Cruz export zone (SEEPZ) the producers were comfortable in the knowledge that Hira could not sell any tapes manufactured on Indian soil.

Today, Hira claims that he paid the producers for "world rights" to their films "and that includes India." This wiry confident Sindhi business tycoon, who spends three days a week on a dialysis machine, has checked with film industry lawyers and been assured that his earlier agreement with film producers does not bar him from distributing those films on video within India.

The producers, apparently not confident about the legal strength of their argument, are already discussing the pros and cons of agreeing to "sell" local rights for their films. While Hira insists that he can distribute the films, he has bought for foreign distribution, in India without any violations of contract—he is willing to pay the producers an extra copyright fee for local distribution in order to keep his peace with the industry. With the assurance of being able to win over the film producers, Hira is in the process of setting up a video production unit in Bombay in partnership with B.R. Chopra. Another

unit is being set up in Gujarat along with a "big producer" whom Hira refuses to identify at this stage.

For his distribution network, Hira is taking care to involve seasoned film distributors. This is a tactic intended not only to utilise the veteran distributors' skills and contacts but also to prevent their feeling threatened by videos. All the major metropolitan areas have already been covered and the network will gradually spread to small towns. Apart from catering to video theatres and individual video owners, Hira is signing contracts with several hotels to provide video entertainment on closed circuit television.

Hira is confident that he can even beat the video pirates by keeping his prices low. The music industry has been driven out of business by pirates, asserts Hira, because of the wide gap between the price of the legitimate and the "illegitimate" product. Given Hira's comparitively high overheads, it is doubtful whether he can turn his ambitious plans to beat piracy into reality.

Regardless of who markets the video cassettes, one thing is clear: these small rectangular magical boxes are going to be available in greater numbers, offering a wider range of subjects, in the near future. Hira's plans are merely representative of the new excitement, in some segments of the film industry, which holds great promise for the millions who thrive on "filmy" entertainment.

What the copyright laws say

The India Copyright Act was pas-sed in 1957, when much of the technology which is today revolutionising the audio-visual entertainment industry did not exist. The All India Film Producers Council (AIFPC) has suggested to the central government that the Copyright Act be amended to explicity state that the producer is the sole and exclusive owner of "the entire copyright in a cinematograph film along with all its derivatives like soundtracks, videograms and discs, all performances including telecasting, broadcasting, cable and wireless diffusion by any process which is presently known or which may be developed in future."

The council's petition begins by stating that the Indian film industry is "facing total annihilation on account of rampant piracy of video and audio cassettes and the illegal screening of films." The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) in a 1981 resolution proclaimed that "Commercial piracy stifles efforts undertaken to safeguard and promote national cul-

tures."

While it is debatable whether commercial Indian cin ema constitutes "national culture" worthy of

promotion, it is certainly the most broad-based form of mass entertainment and thus deserves some protection. The pirate may be popular with audiences for providing relatively cheaper entertainment. But since none of the pirate's profits are ploughed back into the production of films, it eventually threatens to bring the assembly line to a standstill.

The AIFPC, therefore, wants the offence of copyright infringement to be made cognisable and a criminal act under the Indian Penal Code. The council would like legislation along the lines adopted by the Reagan administration, which imposes stiff penalties, including imprisonment for even the first offence. If these suggestions are adopted by the Indian government filed by the copyright owner or his nominee without a warrant, pending investigation.

Since there is no established government agency concerned primarily with enforcement of the copyright laws, the anti-piracy lobby would like to see the existing preventive department within customs and excise to also take action against those violating the Copyright Act. Such government deci-

sions, along with any amendment of the Copyright Act, are not likely to be enacted overnight. Even a favourable amendment of the Act would be no guarantee against the onslaughts of pirates. As one senior customs official acknowledges, given the inherent limitations of the enforcement agencies it would be wiser for the film industry to rapidly adjust to the changing forces and outrun the pirates instead of implementing police methods.

Ironcially, despite the public wailing by film industry magnates over the piracy problem they have taken little concrete and united action. Away from the now increasingly frequent meetings of trade bodies, where attempts are made to determine a strategy for meeting the video challenge, all producers are essentially worrying about and working towards protecting their own immediate interests.

Amendments to the Copyright Act not withstanding, many filmmakers are aware that they are fighting a losing battle against piracy and to ensure survival the producers are busily finding a niche for themselves in the emerging structure of their industry.

mate producers, there is room enough for every one. Given the acute shortage of theatres in India, the small video "theatres," with their low overheads and high turnover, have unlimited potential. India has only 11,259 cinema theatres, at present. UNESCO has estimated that to adequately service its over 700 million people India must have over 30,000 theatres. Though the NFDC has a loan scheme to encourage construction of cinema halls, even its managing director, Mrs Malatı Tambay Vaidya, believes that the future of film distribution lies in television and videos.

The NFDC estimates that there are now over three lakh videos in the country. This does not take into account the machines which have arrived in the country on smugglers' boats. The Bombay customs department does not maintain specific statistics about the number of video machines among the hulls from raids on smuggling centres. But officials working in the preventive depart-ment of Bombay customs report a dramatic increase in the percentage of videos found among smuggled goods, through raids. Says one customs official who refused to be identified: "The government allowed many colour televisions to be imported during the Asiad, and they have not been imported (by the people) to see Amchi Mati Amchi Gulshan Rai: "videos are here to stay"



Manzi (a Marathi television programme on agriculture). So they're on the lookout for VCRs."

These are the developments which are sending shivers down the spines of Bombay film wallah. Says Amit Khanna: "We are listening to the death knell of the Indian film industry." This is due not only to the rapid growth of videos but to the inherently disorganised and chaotic structure of the film industry. The highly individual and personalised style of functioning has made it impossible for banks to lend to film producers. The only source of institutional finance, the NFDC, does not have the base capital to cater to the big budget film makers. In a time of crisis this unavailability of finance is felt most acutely. With a larger proportion of films failing at the boxoffice than ever before, the film industry today considers itself in the throes of an unprecedented crisis. Competition from videos is only further accentuating their problems.

Yet despite the furrowed brows, confusion and disunity still pervades the Bombay film industry. Leading producers may meet several times a week to discuss the video threat and take official delegations to Delhi and to the Maharashtra chief minister, to demand tighter police measures against video entrepreneurs but there is no fundamental agreement on how to deal with the forces of



One of the numerous video circulation centres in Bombay: reaping astronomical profit

change in the long run.

Esquire's Mr Hira sees videos as a boost to filmmakers and says that he is finding an audience for art films on video, which would never have found a theatrical release. But it is not the art filmmaker who is worried. The most affected producers are those who made the low grade pot-boilers with second grade stars and were able to get at least a short run at theatres all over the country. If such films rarely made a profit they usually managed to break even. The proliferation of videos would completely wipe out such films, predict industry pundits.

Consequently, "the fittest will survive," says Gulshan Rai. As the B-grade films are driven out of business, the big banner filmmakers are likely to press their advantage of being able to deliver gigantic, fantastically-packaged films for which the large-theatre experience is essential. The emphasis on special effects and larger-than-life adventures was part of Hollywood's response to the competition from video and cable television.

The cause of the most acute of heartburns and panic among filmmakers is video pirates, now active in all corners of the world. In the USA piracy had reached an alarming stage. A statement by the Motion Picture Association of America and the Recording Industry Association of America to a congressional committee reviewing the matter reported that more than 600 million

dollars were being diverted from legitimate recipients of the (music) recording industry, to pirates. In all, the associations estimated that "pirates and counterfeiters siphon more than a billion dollar a year" from the legitimate industries. In the West, video piracy, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (of the USA) reports, has moved out of its initial stage as the province of small-time operators and is today controlled by the Mafia.

In May, 1982, President Reagan signed a bill passed by the US Congress which dramatically increased the criminal penalties for film, videotape and record piracy and counterfeiting. Piracy is now treated as a felony from the first offence with a possible penalty of up to five years in prison and/or a 250,000 dollar fine.

In India, the NFDC has taken formal note of the piracy problem in its annual report for 1981-82 and says merely that "this problem with all its ramifications is under study and the corporation is in touch with various segments of the industry with a view to devising ways and means to fight this menace." The result has been an appeal by the All India Film Producers' Council, to the central government, for amendments to the Copyright Act which would eliminate loopholes. The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), a United Nations' affiliated body concerned with piracy of any original works or audio-visual works, has also recommended that Copyright laws should be updated to deal with modern forms of infringement and piracy.

Despite pressure from the film and music industry, the government is yet to introduce a bill for a amendment of the Copyright Act. In the meanwhile, film producers and music companies are trying to fight pirates by pleading with enforcement agencies to nab them for violations of other laws like excise, customs, sales and entertainment tax. Mr Hira claims that he has offered to fight pirates with his own money and is willing to spend Rs 25 lakhs to Rs 30 lakhs on the effort. All but the dreamily optimistic, however, admit that eventually piracy like video proliferation, is a phenomenon that the film industry will have to live with.

Those who like to stay one step ahead of the competition are, therefore, already planning to enter the video business and thus flow on with the coming tide. Gulshan Rai is contemplating making videos of his own films and B. R. Chopra is setting up his own production unit. "You can't stop this crisis, the sands in the hour glass will keep pouring down. But then we will turn it over and start afresh," says Amit Khanna."The cinema theatre experience is an intrinsic part of our entertainment culture," adds Khanna, and will, therefore, not disappear in the near future. But the structure, functioning and characteristics of the industry which stands behind it are bound to change rapidly."

Δ7

LOOKING GLASS

Vasantdada Patil makes an about turn

Just how soon politicians forget their pledges and principles, is evident from an encounter that a dedicated social worker from Pune, Baba Adhay, recently had with the Maharashtra chief minister Vasantdada Patil. Adhav, on behalf of the Hamal panchayat, had called on the CM asking him to give representations to the Hamal and the Mathadi workers on the market yard commit-



Vasantdada: dirty spots?

tees since they were closely involved with the operations in the market yards. Vasantdada Patil flatly refused to oblige, saying: "If we give representation today they may stand for elections to the chairman and president of the market yard committees. And do you want a Hamal to be your president or chairman?" Now, isn't Vasantdada, as a Congressman, pledged to democracy and social justice? But then, can a leopard change its spots?

Arjun Singh's sham war on corruption

Madhya Pradesh chief minister Arjun Singh does not let go of a single opportunity to trumpet how serious he is about rooting out corruption in high places. He even sent a senior civil servant of the state to Delhi after the promulgation of the anti-corruption ordinance (it is now an Act) in the state to secure adequate publicity for him in the capital. But with all the anti-



Arjun Singh: not earnest?

corruption acts and the appointment of Lokayukta (the Indian equivalent of Ombudsman) to check corruption, people who know the ropes can still get away. Nothing else can explain why a report submitted by one of the chief secretaries Mr Chib, on the financial irregularities in the state lift irrigation corporation, is gathering dust. Parus Ram Bhadoriya, a Congress(I) MLA was the chairman of the corporation (since dissolved). Arjun Singh had set up a three member tribunal under Mr Chib to go into the allegation that the irregularities and lapses of the corporation had cost the state exchequer over Rs one crore. The tribunal submitted its report in November last year, by and large substantiating the charges and held some senior officials of the corporation responsible for the loss to the exchequer. But Arjun Singh is sitting on the report and has not even placed it before the cabinet. So much for Arjun Singh's war on corruption.

P.C. Alexander's southern expedition



Alexander: no qualms

the norm is that civil servants will not dabble in politics. The service rules too prohibit this. Nevertheless, Mrs Gandhi has been sending out civil servants on political missions for quite some time. But never has a civil servant acted so openly for a political party as the Prime Minister's principal secretary, Dr P.C. Alexander, did when he visited Kerala in the first week of May

ostensibly to attend a marriage. But it soon became evident that his actual mission was to sort out the differences among the squabbling coalition partners of the Congress(I)-led government and prevent the possibility of the Congress(I) losing its only foothold in the south. Although this has raised a lot of eyebrows and scathing criticism from opposition parties, Dr Alexander, a native of Kerala, continued to hold discussions with political leaders.

CMs council gets another recruit

What started as a sudden brainwave of the Kainataka chief minister, Ramakrishna Hegde, now seems to be catching up with other non-Congress(I) chief ministers. The latest convert to the idea of a council of non-Congress chief ministers is the formidable Marxist chief minister of West Bengal, Jyoti Basu. And if Basu is there can the chief minister of the other Marxist state Tripura, Nripen Chakrabarty, be far behind? By all indications, therefore, when the southern chief ministers next meet in Madras in June, they will probably, have at least two important guests—the CMs of West Bengal and Tripura.

Underground Naga outfit cracking

Relations between Isaak Swu, chairman of the Burma-based rebel National Socialist Council (NSC) of Nagaland and the organisation's general secretary Th. Muivah have turned sour. Muivah was expecting that Swu would be able to secure some arms and ammuni tion from China for his outlawed outfit. Apparently Swu drew a blank with the Chinese. He was told that the supplies would not be available before three years. That was the proverbial straw on the camel's back. For quite some time now Swu has been complaining that the insurgents belonging to his tribe, the semas in the guerrilla outfit, were looked down upon by Muivah and those belonging to Muivah's tribe, the Thangkul Nagas, were always getting the cake. The pro-Maoist and anti-Phizo NSCN guerrilla group raised by Muivah in January 1980 is now facing rough weather with Burmese troops making a determined bid to flush the insurgents out from their Arakan hills sanctuary.

KARNATAKA

Thumping majority for Hegde

And a fresh mandate for the Janata government

Bangalore: Polling 66 per cent of the total votes cast on 15 May this year at the Kanakapura byelection, chief minister Ramakrishna Hegde scored an astounding victory over his nearest Congress(I) rival, Mr D. Linge Gowda, by a margin of over 23,000 votes. The unquestionable mandate for Mr Hegde was, in effect, an approval of the Janata government's performance in Karnataka over the last four months. The Kanakapura byelection was also significant insofar as it helped the chief minister to overcome a political adversary of some reckoning: Mr S. Bangarappa. Mr Bangarappa's Karnataka Kranti Ranga (KKR) had made every effort to wreck the Janata government in Karnataka; so vociferous was Mr Bangarappa in the recent past that he was being regarded as a formidable adversary to Mr Hegde. But at Kanakapura, the KKR met its Waterloo, mustering an apalling 316 votes and losing its deposit in the process. Mr Bangarappa's political future appears bleak, particularly in view of the fact that his party also lost its deposit at the Yelburga byelection held on the same day.

The Kanakapura Assembly seat had been vacated by Janata MLA and state health minister, Mr P. G. R. Sindhia. The main issue at stake in this constituency was the approbation of the schemes and measures initiated by the Janata government. Mr Hegde's victory was perhaps a foregone conclusion: his government had successfully solved the water problem in this backward taluk; it had shown, in sharp contrast to the Congress(I), great interest in this constituency by appointing a health minister from here. Mr Sindhia had taken pains to nurse this constituency, and the new Janata candidate, with all his simplicity and humility, had pleasantly surprised the people who had been more familiar with the ostentatious splendour of the Congres**s**(I).

For once, the all-important caste factor was relegated to the second place. Kanakapura proved that it may be a long road to ideologies, but issues have certainly become an important factor in elections today.

In perfect contrast to Mr Hegde's simplicity was the sprightliness of the Janata Party campaigners. There were no paid workers, yet the consti-

anti, and •°.



Hegde: thinking ahead

tuency was gayly bedecked with Janata Party flags, banners, festoons and posters. Public enthusiasm was stupendous and it exceeded the expectations of even the party cam-paigners. For instance, Mr Hegde's padayatra in Kanakapura town was a resoudning success—grudgingly admitted by even the Congress(I). On the other hand, the Congress(I)'s was a dejected campaign. From the day of Mr Hegde's padayatra they knew that they were fighting a losing battle. Initially they had called in an impressive entourage which comprised Messrs S. M. Krishna, Veerendra Patil, G. K. Moopanaf, Chandreshekara Murthy (Congress-I MP trom Kanakapura) and a host of MLAs and local leaders. Yet the villagers were far too absorbed with Mr Hegde to cast anything more than a cursory, indifferent glance at the entrourage. As the Congress(I) voteseekers realised to their dismay that they could no longer hold the villagers spellbound, their campaign was reduced to a farce.

However, the Congress(I) did not fare 'too badly. As Mr Veerappa Moily, leader of the Congress(I) legislature party, told this correspondent, the erosion of the Congress(I)'s strength was only by 2,000 votes He pointed out that given the fact that it

was a person of Mr Hegde's stature contesting at Kanakapura, this erosion was inevitable.

The Congress(I) was lucky insofar as the people of the constituency were merely indifferent to it. To Mr Bangarappa, they were positively hostile: from the 'martyr' he had become the 'betrayer.' His wild allegations against the Janata government in Karnataka and against Mr Hegde's cousin (who was. allegedly, involved in a rice smuggling racket), his treacherous dealings with the Congress(I), his plots and conspiracies, had clearly enraged the local people. A number of constituents told this correspondent that they would reduce him to "a man without an address." And they did just that: on one occasion, Mr Bangarappa was even pelted with rotten eggs, tomatoes and chappals by the normally peace-loving Karnadigas.

Both the Congress(I) and KKR were vociferous in their allegations against the "misuse of official machinery" and hooliganism by the Janata government during electioneering. They alleged that the elections had not be conducted in a free and fair manner. Mr Hegde responded by asking the election commission to probe into the charges. Whatever the outcome of the probe (if at all it is held), the truth is that it was the Congress(I) campaigners who travelled in the more impressive convoys, and on the eve of the elections the police seized cash, liquor and lathis from vehicles belonging to the Congress(I) supporters. Mr Hegde's victory has given rise to the speculation that the Congress(I) MLAs in Karnataka will now be tripping over each other to cross the floor. However, Mr Verrappa Moily, while speaking to this correspondent, ruled out the possibility of defections; he asserted that his partymen would not take such a "shortsighted step" as the Congres-s(I) is the only party which has a future, not only in Karnataka but at the national level as well. Meanwhile, Mr Ramakrishna Hegde has emerged a leader within his own right. He is confident that his victory will prove to be a great morale booster to the Janata Party. Perhaps, the Janata experiment has begun all

over again.

Anita Pratap

'We have to proceed very cautiously'

Bangalore: The long-awaited Kanakapura polls were over. True to his informal style, the Karnataka chief minister, Mr Ramakrishna Hegde, agreed to be interviewed by Sunday while travelling in his car from his residence to Vidhana Soudha. The driver of the car was instructed to proceed slowly, so that the interview could be stretched to the maximum possible time. Excerpts:

Q: By what margin had you expected to win?

A: I couldn't say really, but I had expected it to be by over 15,000 votes.

Q: That would have been a rockbottom margin. You had to score a moral victory. It was imperative that you secured a better margin than Mr Sindhia (the Janata MLA who won the January election with a margin of 13,000 votes).

A: True. Well, I mean, in an election, it is a combination of various factors. At the time of Sindhia's election, there was not so much of a concentration of the opposition forces (in Kanakapura). They made it a kind of life-and-death issue. Well, I mean I can understand that.

Q: What factors do you think contributed to your astounding vic-

A: Well, primarily I consider it a vindication of the stand and policies and programmes that we have initiated. The issue at stake in this election was value-based politics. You know, in the last ten years, (in fact) more than ten years, there has been a deterioration in (political) values, with the result that people started losing faith in politicians as a class and that spelt great danger for the democratic system itself.

"hat we tried to do in Karnataka after the elections (in January) was to introduce certain principles in politics. Well, the Janata victory in

Kanakapura is a vindication of that.

Q: To what extent would you attribute it to your personal charisma?

A: Well, I don't believe in this sort of thing...

Q: The villagers I spoke to were totally impressed by your humility and simplicity.

A: May be in a small measure, it might have also contributed to the

Q: Your victory portends a consolidation of the Janata Party in Karnataka and perhaps at the national level too. At the state level, how do you propose going about this task of consolidation?

A: Well, you see, we have to do a lot to build up the organisation at the grassroot level. Now that the party is in power, and because of this victory, two things will happen. One is: a lot of new people will rush into the party. And two: our own party workers might develop a sense of complacency. We have to have a kind of screening process with regard to the first. And with regard to the second, we have to give concrete programmes to the party workers and see that they are always active and act as a kind of medium between the government and the people, bringing the people's demands, grievances, problems, to the notice of the authorities and educating the people with regard to the various measures that the government has taken. We have to do a lot.

Q: What, according to you, will be the impact of your victory in national politics?

A: Well I think this will give a great moral boost to the party as a whole because, you know, people all over the country, particularly those who are interested in politics, had entertained apprehensions that when the Janata government

was formed here, it would meet the same fate as the Janata government in the centre in 1977-79. We have to allay these apprehensions and in order to do this we have to proceed very cautiously. I mean, we do not have a majority of our own in the Assembly. I have to walk on very slippery ground. I have to watch every step of mine.

Q: Do you think your victory is destined to be the harbinger of a second Janata experiment at the

centre?

A: Well, much depends on how the Janata Party units in the various states function, and how much advantage they take to build up the organisation. Well, I have no doubt that this government (in Karnataka) will last for the full term. We will bring a totally different kind of administration which will be honest, responsive and responsible.

Q: Would you say that a second Janata experiment is a distinct pos-

sibility now?

A: I feel that the Janata Party is democratic, it follows socialist policies, it has an all-India fame and it has an all-India base and therefore it is quite possible. I hope it will happen.

Q: How long will it take for the Janata Party to emerge a united, viable alternative to the

Congress(I) once again?

A: As I said, it all depends on how we build up the organisation in the whole country. Our colleagues in other states should be active, (they should) organise the party units and they should do a lot to build up their party at the grassroot level.

Q: With your victory, there could well be another Janata wave in the country. What steps do you think Mrs Gandhi will take to stall this

wave?

A: I cannot take anticipatory steps in connection with this matter. I would like to wait and see what kind of steps she would take. And I would not presume that she would try to do anything to destabilise the government here.

Q: Now you are being diplomatic. A: (Laughs, but doesn't say any-

hing).

Q: She is always a couple of steps ahead. So you have to take anticipatory steps...

A: Well, even if I would like to take anticipatory steps, I would not like to reveal them to you (laughs).

Q: That I can quite understand. Would you say that the last nail has been struck in Bangarappa's coffin with your victory?

A: (Smiles) I never gave this Bangarappa factor any more importance than it deserved.

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Hegde with Morarji and Chandra Shekhar: time to consolidate

Ashok Mitra: A step away from victory?

Calcutta: No sensible bookie is willing to touch with a bargepole the suburban Jadavpur constituency, where the CPI(M) has fielded the former state finance minister, Dr Ashok Mitra, to contest the Assembly byelection on 5 June. Even the main opposition party in the state, the Congress(I), revealed its lack of confidence by nominating its candidate just a few days before 10 May, the last date for filing nominations. The nomination papers of the independent candidate, Mr Subrata Chattopadhyay, were rejected during scrutiny just a few weeks before the date of the election.

The Jadavpur byelection, necessitated by the untimely death of former power minister Mr Shankar Gupta, has afforded the CPI(M) a chance to bring back to its ministerial fold at least one of the two tormer ministers (Dr Ashok Mitra and Mr Buddhadev Bhattacharya)

whose absence in the second Left Front government was being visibly felt. Of the two, Dr Mitra's role in the last Left Front government had been significant in terms of his effort to exhort more funds from the centie. By focusing on the shortcomings of existing centre-state relations in an uncommonly cogent and persistent manner, Dr Mitra had also succeeded in arousing the interest of other state governments. There is a nagging fear that Dr Mitra's inclusion in the state government would once again sour whatever cordial relations that the state has managed to establish with the centre; but it is unlikely that he will change his tune if he is inducted into the state

The intentions of the CPI(M) in fielding Dr Mitra as its candidate in Jadavpur are quite transparent. If the Left Front, or rather the CPI(M), was not keen to have him in the

cabinet, Dr Mitra would not have been given the advantage of contesting from a constituency which is as 'safe' as Jadavpur for the CPI(M). Dr Mitra lost in the last Assembly elections from Rash Behari Avenue constituency, which has a predominantly upper middle-class population. The Jadavpur constituency is, however, quite different from Rash Behari Avenue. Here the electorate predominantly comprises lower middle-class immigrants. Over the years the CPI(M) has succeeded in establishing strong grassroot support in this area. So 'red' is the area that the Jadavpur municipality is being merged with Calcutta Corporation, so that in the event of elections to the Calcutta Corporation, large number of votes go to CPI(M) nominees.

The state of the s

The CPI(M)'s campaigning appeared to be on a low key right from the beginning. But this was more because the constituency did not need any ostentatious campaigning. However, Dr Mitra did step up his campaign after the second week of May. The Congress(I) candidate, Dr Sukumar Dutta, a professor in Jadavpur University, appears to be fighting a losing battle; his muted campaign bears ample evidence of this.

Indranil Banerjie

'What the party decides I have to carry out'

Calcutta: Barely three weeks before the Jadavpur byelection, former West Bengal finance minister, Dr Ashok Mitra, spoke to SUNDAY about his decision to contest the Assembly byelection and the need to review centre-state relations. Excerpts:

Q: What made you decide to contest the Assembly byelection from Jadavpur constituency?

A: This decision was not taken by any one individual. I am a member of a political party and what the party decides I have to carry out. The party obviously wanted me to contest the byelection because its interest would be served by my doing so.

Q: It is commonly believed that the Left Front government wants you as its finance minister. Com-

A: I cannot speculate on this. The elections haven't yet been held and whatever the outcome, whether or not I am made a minister will depend on the government's decision

Q: During the last couple of years there has been a noticeable decline in the rate of growth of tax revenue in West Bengal. Isn't this a sign of administrative complacency and an increase in corruption?

A: Firstly, one ought to remember that between 1976-77 and 1981-82, West Bengal's total budget had



Ashok Mitra: set for victory

increased from about Rs 750 crores to Rs 1,900 crores, which is the fastest rate of budget growth witnessed by any state—and the centre—during the post independence period. Ever since Mrs Gandhi came back to power in New Delhi the mobilisation of additional resources has become difficult for the states.

During the period 1977-82, the state government had made every effort to increase resource mobilisation by introducing several new revenue measures: increasing col

lection from existing taxes; and completely reorganising the small savings scheme. During the last two years, however, the Left Front government has been under the constant threat of dismissal by the centre. No government under such pressure would find motivation to increase resource mobilisation.

Q: Can the state government expect more funds from the centre by constantly harping on the inequities of present day centre-state relations in the country?

A: Definitely. Qualitatively, things are far more different now than they were when the Left Front government first came to power in 1977. At that time no one supported our demand to restructure centrestate relations but now we have at least six states with us. Besides, many Congress(I) chief ministers in private conversation have congratulated us for our stand.

The fact is that the heat is on, and all the chief ministers can feel this. Things have changed since the colonial days and the first 25 years of independence when social awareness was limited. Today, the people at the grassroot levels have become more articulate and active in voicing their demands. No state government can ignore this change. But New Delhi, with its small population, hardly feels the stirrings all over the country.

A loss of identity

Bombay: There is grave discontent in Maharashtra against the continuing manipulation of the state from New Delhi. The Maharashtrians feel that while most states, whether the newly-freed-from-Congress(I) states like Karnataka andAndhra Pradesh, or Punjab where the centre is being slowly but surely made to bow to the demands of the Akalis, the ethnic population is allowed to have its respective identities. Maharashtra, on the other hand, is sought to be moulded into an image in which the Maharashtrians have no

Letters to the editor in popular Marathi dailies cite the simple instance of how the people of the state are not allowed to change the name of Bombay to Mumbai-which was its original name before the British changed it. Although resolutions have been passed changing the name of Bombay to Mumbai in the Bombay municipal corporation, the centre has not given its consent to the renaming. In fact, it has positively said that the name should not be changed. As recently as last week the chief minister, Mr Vasantdada Patil had said that the "issue was a closed one."

Pramod Navalkar, a journalist and Shiv Sena legislator, commented, "Why in the first place should the corporation or anyone ask the permission of the centre. No such permission was requested for when the government changed the name of Kolaba district to Raigad, and Ratnagiri district to Sindhudurg. Why should it be done in the case of Bombay? In neighbouring Goa the name of its capital Panjim was changed to the more ethnic Panaji and so also in Maharashtra, Thana, Dhulia and Poona went back to their original Thane, Dhule and Pune."

Every chief minister from Mr V.P. Naik onwards, has proved ineffective in implementing the change of name. Meanwhile, Madras has changed to Tamil Nadu and Mysore to Karnataka and soon Andhra Pradesh may change to Telugu Desam. But Bombay has to remain Bombay despite the wishes of the people of Maharashtra. The government and the westernised, non Maharashtrian section of the population who have the money power and the clout give all kinds of weak explanations. For instance, they say that Bombay is the name on the world map and any change in it would cause enormous problems. But even this is easily countered by the ethnic population when they cite the example of Peking changing overnight to Beijing without a whimper from the rest of the world.

Another act of provocation against the identity of Maharashtra is the television programmes. Despite the chief minister taking it up with the centre, nothing has happened. The demand is for 80 per cent of the programmes being in Marathi, but today they are not even 38 per cent. The south has not only succeeded in doing away with Hindi programmes but has persuaded the government to revert to "All India Radio" when Mr Vasant Sathe, the then minister for information and broadcasting had changed it to "Akashvani."

These two instances are only the symptoms of a deeper discrimination facing the ethnic Maharashtrian population. Over the years they have been discriminated against in favour of the southerners and the northerners. For instance, one grouse is that since 1974, the Maharashtrian vendors have been pushed into the background in the fish and vegetables markets. These commodities have been taken over for exports by those having close connection with the Gulf countries. Vending licences are also given to the southerners, as in the case of Apollo Bunder and Dadar station. An interesting fact about the hawkers at Plaza cinema is that about ten years ago'all the galas (shops) were given to northerners who got the "protection" of none

other than a leading Shiv Sena corporator. The plight of the Maharashtrians deteriorated over the years only because of such dishonesty in a section of the Shiv Sena leadership. They came to power on the promise of helping Maharashtrians in getting their due place in the state, and then used the clout they built up to line their own pockets. The Maharashtrian was slowly ousted.

Even in the matter of housing, the Maharashtrians are being pushed out of the city. As the old buildings they occupied collapsed or had to be repaired, they got pushed into the suburbs. Sanjay Bhide, a budding architect, says that he has personally witnessed Maharashtrians being discouraged from trying to buy flats in the new housing colonies that are coming up in the suburbs. As he says, when Maharashtrian families go to the builder, he deliberately inflates the prices. This is happening on a large scale in Nala Sopra, and Virar where Gujarati builders get their plans sanctioned. Bhide also had a disconcerting experience with his North Bombay Chapter, Jaycees, of which he is a member. He has, for years, been fighting an individual battle for using Mumbai instead of Bombay. He had suggested that the official name could be kept since that has been registered, but when writing letters, etc, it can be referred to as North Mumbai. Ever since he brought this up and tried to practise this in some official letters of the Jaycees, he has been removed from all their project committees.

Olga Tellis

MEDIA

A daily puts detectives on a murder trail

Calcutta: Tirthankar Das Sharma and Sanjeeb Chatterjee were great friends. Both of them were of the same age (16), studying in the same class and living in about the same locality in Barrackpore, 30 km north of Calcutta. They seemed to be in a great hurry when they left Sanjeeb's place together on the afternoon of 21 March. They were last seen watching a religious procession at about 6.30 pm near the Barrackpore railway station. The boys did not return to their homes at night.

Next morning, their worried parents Dilip Chatterjee and Amal Das Sharma went to the nearest police station Titagarh to report that their sons were missing. They also lodged similar reports with the missing persons squad of the West Bengal police and the DIG (CID). Announcements were made over the radio and the TV; advertisements were inserted in newspapers. But results were not forthcoming. Then, on 5 April, came.

a piece of information: the postmaster of a Barrackpore post office, who was a commuter, had heard that the police had recently found two bodies on the railway track near Pandua railway station. They were of boys of about the same age and the same build as Tirthankar and Sanjeeb.

for Pandua. There, their worst fears were confirmed when they were shown bloodstained clothes and personal belongings which had been found on the bodies by the railway police: they were those of their sons. When Mr Das Sharma and Mr Chatterjee reached the morgue to take delivery of the bodies they were told that those had already been disposed of since there were no claimants for them. They, however, were shown the photographs of the bodies: they were those of their sons.

It was the driver of an inspection train who first saw the bodies lying on the track near a railway crossing, about half-a-kilometre from the station. Both the boys had apparently been run over by a train: Tirthank ar's head was battered beyond recognition and Sanjeeb's head, severed from his body, was found lying between two tracks. The driver reported this to the railway police at Pandua at around 5 am, on Tuesday 22 March.

The police were slow to react. The Bandel railway police received the message from Pandua two hours after the train driver had made his report. Even then, the railway police did not take up the investigation seriously. They did not inform the matter to all the neighbouring police stations, as they should have done, to establish the identity of the bodies Although, on 5 April, the officer-incharge of Titagarh police station got the message that the bodies were possibly those of the missing boys, it was only in the morning of 6 April that he thought of going to Pandua railway station to see them.

The police had already made up their minds. Even before they had received the autopsy report, the director general of West Bengal police, Mr Golak Majumdar gave his verdict on 7 April: the boys had committed suicide. If the police are to be believed, then both the boys having planned to commit suicide together, travelled to Pandua, some 50 kms from Barrackpore, presumably by train, changing trains on the way. On reaching Pandua they chat ted and smoked for hours near a level crossing waiting for a train that.





Tirthankar and Sanjeeb: suicide or murder?

would come that way at about midnight. It was in front of the train they were waiting for that they flung themselves and got run over.

The parents of Tirthankar and Sanjeeb however, were not convinced. They did not think that sons had any reason to commit suicide. Even assuming that both of them had decided to end their lives together. why should they have taken the trouble of going to Pandua when there were railway tracks close to their homes? The parents, therefore, sought West Bengal chief minister Jyoti Basu's intervention. Initially, Mr Basu doubted the police theory as well, and he conveyed this to newsmen in Calcutta on 8 April. He also ordered the DIG (CID), Biren Saha, to investigate the case personally

On 13 April Mr Saha submitted his report, on the basis of which Mr Basu told the West Bengal Assembly on 14 April that the boys might have committed suicide after all.

But this did not resolve all doubts. So, to find out how the boys died, the Bengali daily Anandabazar Patrika requisitioned the services of a leading Calcutta detective agency, the 'Secret Eye'. The agency is run by a former DIG of West Bengal police, Debabrata Dhar, IP, and has among its staff, a number of former police intelligence officers. Professionals coming to the aid of the newspapers is not unusual in Western countries; but this is for the first time that this has been tried out in India. That way *Anandabazar Patrika* may have set a new trend in the country.

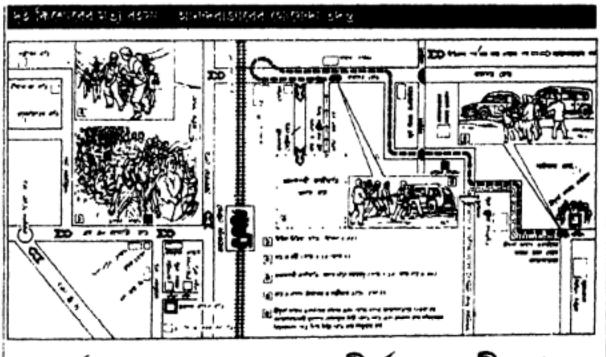
In his two reports (published in Anandabazar Patrika on 11 and 18 May) Mr Dhar has suggested that the boys had been murdered in cold blood. Demolishing the police theory of suicide, the report says that the two missing boys had stumbled upon some damaging information about the activities of a person engaged in manufacturing hand made bombs, smuggling narcotics and forging currency notes. For quite sometime, this individual was looking for an opportunity to silence the boys and finally the opportunity came on 21 March As the religious meeting which Sanjeeb and Tirthankar were watching broke up following a thundershower, six hired goons caught the boys and forced them into a van parked some distance away. The boys were taken by the van to a car waiting some five kms away. In the car they were rendered unconscious with chloroform and then driven to a secluded spot near Pandua railway station. The unconscious boys were then carried to the railway track and placed on it. This report has put the West Bengal police in a tricky spot. Mr Dhar has offered to place all the evidence he has collected in the course of his investigations in the hands of the police, but will they accept it and swallow their own

A Special Correspondent

words?

Dhar report on Anandabazar Patrika's front page.





কুকর্মের কথা জেনে ফেলায় তীর্থংকর-সঞ্জীব খুন

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ORISSA

Squabbles plague **NALCO** project

Bhubaneswar: The prestigious project of the centralsector's National Aluminium Company (NALCO), in progress in Orissa, has a long list of firsts. Most impressive among them: it is the biggest on-going project in eastern India; the biggest aluminium complex in Asia; the only aluminium project of its size under implementation in the world; having the world's largest bauxite deposit (390 million tonnes) tied up with it; utilising the biggest Eurodollar loan (680 million dollars) India has ever raised; and going to have Asia's longest conveyor belt (14.63 km) to link the bauxite

mines and the plant.

The oft-announced commitment of NALCO is that it will complete the project on schedule—that is by the end of 1985. NALCO office rooms at Bhubaneswar and project sites at Damanjodi (Koraput) and Angul prominently display well-printed leaflets reminding the officers and the workforce of this commitment. Construction works at the sites have so far registered impressive progress. But now, doubts have started setting in about adhering to the schedule due to a tug-of-war between the union ministry of mines and NALCO. It is, essentially, a personality clash between the secretary of mines, Mr R.Ganapathi, and the NALCO chairman-cum-managing director, Mr K.S. Ramachandran.

Since its inception, Mr Ganapathi has tried to excercise control over this giant Rs 1600-crore project. He was understood to have resisted the move to make Mr Ramachandran the head of NALCO. But the state chief minister J.B. Patnaik's attempts to make the Orissacadre IAS officer NALÇO's chairman, succeeded. Mr Ganapathi's action, merely as secretary of the ministry which has administrative control over the company, would not have been resented by the company authorities, but his "uncalled for" interference into all sorts of details like award of contracts and appointment of personnel has affronted the company's top brass.

The appointment of Mr R. Gupta as the director of NALCO, in charge of the project is considered by the company officers as a stumbling block to progress. Mr Gupta's appointment is understood to have been made at the instance of Mr Ganapathi and at the cost of Mr Satyabadi Satpathy, now advisor technology, NALCO, who contributed significantly to the project during the preparatory stage. Mr Satpathy was almost sure to be made a director and he was sent to Bhubaneswar by Mr Ramachandran with that understanding. But, to his surprise and to the disappointment of Mr Ramachandran and other officials of the company, Mr Ganapathi's efforts to sidetrack him and appoint Mr Gupta succeeded. As project director, Mr Gupta, a civil engineer, is supoposed to stay at Bhubaneswar, his headquarters. But since his appointment in December 1982, he has barely stayed at Bhubaneswar for a total period of three weeks. Whenever he has chosen to visit Bhubaneswar, he has remained there only for a couple of days before returning to Delhi. Well-furnished rooms at the NALCO guest houses at Bhubaneswar and Calcutta have unnecessarily been blocked by him. A host of the company's officers have been continuously airdashing to Delhi almost daily with important papers solely for his perusal and decision. The time-consuming and highly expensive process which NALCO has been subjected to, particularly following Mr Gupta's appointment, is increasingly becoming a matter of criticism in various

S.P. Nanda

Science for children

Produced by Vikram A. Sarabhai Community Science Centre and VIKSAT Ahmedabad

Diffraction with a single slit

This is perhaps the simplest experiment which requires only a lamp, and some coloured filters. All that you have to do is to stand at a distance from the lamp and look through the slit formed when you hold up your forefinger and middle finger. Narrow down the slit and see how the pattern changes. Do you see a very bright fringe in the middle and fringes on either side which fade in intensity as you go away from the middle fringe? Now take a transparent coloured filter and place it over the lamp and observe it as before. What you see is a phenomenon exhibited by waves known as "diffraction."

Diffraction is a phenomenon in which the waves bend past along an edge. For this reason you do not see shadows of very sharp objects. Here, secondary waves from the same slit interfere and give rise to fringes.

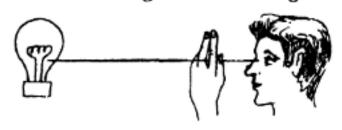
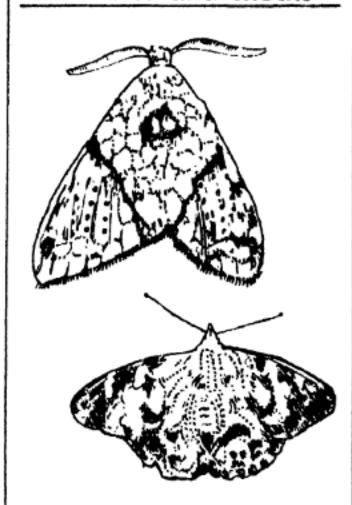


Figure this out

In the figure below, place three five paise coins in the squares marked A, B, C and three 25 paise coins in the squares marked D, E, F. Move the coins one by one from square to square so that in the end, the 25-paise coins are on A, B, C and the five paise coins are on D, E, F. Not more than one coin can occupy a square at any time.

| Α | | | | D |
|----|---|---|---|---|
| Β, | ٩ | Ø | R | E |
| C | | 0 | | F |

Butterflies and moths



If you find it hard to distinguish butterflies from moths, here are some tips: butterflies are found in the daytime while moths are generally nocturnal creatures. Secondly, the antennae of butterflies are long with knobs at the ends while those of moths are feathery. And of course, the butterfly has vividly coloured wings. On the other hand, the wings of the moth are mostly dull and practically merge with its surroundings.

RA-EB-OE

EB-FP-OF-PE-BR-AO

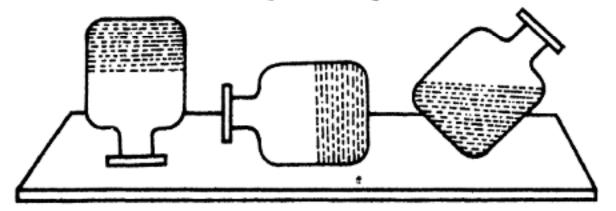
BO-EB-DP-OD-PE-BR-CO-RC

Figure this out: Each pair of letters below indicates a move of a coin from the first letter to the second.

Answers

Spot what's wrong

Can you make out what is wrong with this picture?



Do you know?

An intricate nerve system controls the flow of blood to the skin and muscles. Thousands of microscopic blood vessels which join the arteries bring blood to different parts including the muscles and skin. Each of these blood vessels is regulated by its own nerve which opens or closes it. The skin of the face becomes suffused with a blush when some of the nerves, disturbed by anger, fear, or shame, turn on the tap controlling the blood supply. And since we have no control over the flow of blood to or from the heart, there is little hope of controlling that give-away blush.

SCIENCE BRIEFS

IF you are motion sick, try a teaspoon of ginger. Two psychologists of USA selected 36 volunteers who were highly susceptible to motion sickness and gave them two capsules of powdered ginger root each. They were then blindfolded, put in a motor driven revolving chair and asked every few seconds to describe the feelings in their stomachs. The chair revolved for six minutes unless the person vomited or asked it to be stopped. Most of the volunteers completed the test and none felt bad.

HUMAN beings may be distantly related to soya beans. A micro-biologist at the university of California based his conclusion on the evidence that small nodules on the plant contain fluids similar to blood pigments found in human beings.

THEY may not be able to solve intricate mathematical problems yet, but researches conducted by animal behaviourists Guy Woodruff and David Premack suggest that chimpanzees are capable of developing a rudimentary knowledge of arithmetic. The researchers tested one adult chimpanzee and four younger ones to determine their grasp of the mathematical concept of proportion and quantity. They gave the animals a quarterfilled glass of water, then offered them alternatives of a half grape fruit and a quarter grape fruit. The chimps had to recognize that the quarter grape fruit and the glass of water were similar in proportion. In subsequent tests conducted on the basis of this assumption, the adult chimpanzee came out with flying colours scoring as much as 48 out of 48. Rajiv bagcni

After three tough sets of tennis, Staminade puts back what sweat takes out: your vital body salts.



Sweating and vital body salts

Every time you exercise, you sweat ... and lose vital body salts. The symptoms? A dry throat, thirst, 'heavy' legs, general fatigue. You're probably so used to these symptoms that you accept them as part of the exercise. They're not And in extreme cases, the symptoms can be more severe cramps, nausea, even unconsciousness

How vital are vital body salts?

These salts are made up of sodium, potassium, chloride, citrate and magnesium. And each of them plays a vital role in your body chemistry. They keep your reflexes sharp, your muscles in tone, maintain your fluid balance, and convert carbohydrates into energy.

Water alone doesn't help

Thirst is caused not just by water loss, but also by loss of vital body salts. Drinking glass after glass of water does not quench your thirst or relieve the other symptoms of dehydration. In fact, too much water only dlutes whatever salts are left. Your body machinery does replace vital salts from your food. But that is a very slow process.

Staminade is vital body salts

Staminade does in minutes what your body, left to itself, would take hours to achieve. It relieves dehydration and restores your energy, by replacing body fluids and vital body salts. What does Staminade contain? It's a formulation of all your vital body salts, reinforced with glucose.

with no artificial stimulants.

Yes, it does taste good

Fresh-green Staminade tastes of lime and salt, sweetened with glucose. It comes to you in the form of powder, and dissolves easily in a glass of water.

A good name in Australia . . . now in India

Staminade is widely used in the sporting nation of Australia . .by casual players, professional sportsmen, and those who lead an active life. Now, for the first

time, you can buy it in India . . .a product of Nicholas Laboratories India Ltd.







ARIES (15 April—14 May) This week is particularly favourable for love and marriage. Valuable new friendships are forecast. Be

cautious in your dealings with elderly relatives This is a crucial week for businessmen Young people and intellectuals will contribute to your success and well being. A word of caution, look after your health this week. There is a possibility that elders may influence you for the better

Good dates: 29, 30 and 31 Lucky numbers: 4, 6 and 7 Favourable direction: South



TAURUS (15 May---14 June)A promotion is in the offing for some people Needless risks may harm you financially. A secret

affair may end sadly. You may have health problems this week. There are chances that you may change your job or place of residence. Your domestic front will be harmonious. Try not to lose your confidence and control your temper. You may have to travel.

Good dates: 2, 3 and 4 Lucky numbers: 2, 5 and 8. Favourable direction: West



GEMINI (15 June—14 July) The time is particularly

(a) favourable for those in service Promotions or trans-22 fers are in store for you this

week. You may undertake a journey which will solve a domestic problem. Art, literature or music may influence you this week. Do not pursue matrimonial negotiations this week. Keep a close watch on your health.

Good dates: 3, 4 and 5 Lucky numbers: 4, 7 and 8 Favourable direction. East



CANCER (15 July--14 August) You have excellent opportunities to expand your business and improve your finances this week. Do

not let an illness in the family dishearten you A happy romance is probable. Be careful of deceit and avoid gambling. Your health is likely to improve this week.

Good dates: 29 2 and 4 Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 6 Favourable direction: South-East

LEO (15 August---14 September) Be on the lookout for treachery and deception ላ On the professional front you may encounter serious

opposition. Avoid guarrels and curb erratic tendencies. The time is particularly favourable for sportsmen. Your domestic life will continue to be happy. For parents this could be a week of satisfaction A word of caution do not readily trust those who may claim to be your friends

Take care of your health. Good dates: 29,31 and 2 Lucky numbers: 6, 7 and 8. Favourable direction: South-East.



VIRGO (15 September—14 October) For those in love, this is a favourable week However, curb the tempta-I tion to be impulsive. It is

also a good week for speculations businessmen, if you want to enter into new contracts this is the time to do it. You are advised to be careful in your dealings with your colleagues and be tactful with your subordinates. A long awaited journey may materialise this week.

Good Dates: 30, 1 and 3. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 7. Favourable direction: North



Z LIBRA (15 October-14 November) A good week for businessmen: investments are likely to bring in handsome returns. For those in

service a promotion is likely Guard against deception and do not be over optimistic. For those in love, happy times are signified you may even get married this week. Letters may bring good news. A word of caution look after your health.

Good dates: 30, 2 and 3. Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 4. Favourable direction: South-West



SCORPIO (15 November---14 December) You may be // given a new assignment. This week may involve financial gains for you. This

week augurs well for matters of the heart and those concerning your family. This is a good week for artists; you may get the recognition which you have been seeking.

Good dates: 29 1 and 2 . Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 6. Favourable direction: South-East.



SAGITTARIUS (15 December-14 January) The first two days of this week are particularly favourable for you. There will be progress

on the professional front. This will be a lucky phase for courtship and marriage. You are advised to be circumspect in your dealings with others. Speculations are unlikely to yield favourable results Enemies will continue to work against you but without much success. Look after your health

Good dates: 30 31 and 3 Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 9 Favourable direction: North



CAPRICORN (15 January—14 February) Those in service will win the praise of their employers Inspite of sonie financial loss you will make

steady progress this week. This is not the right time for speculation or gambling Disputes are likely on the domestic front A new Mendship is indicated. You would do well to seek and act upon the advice of others. Check extravagance and do not lose your temper.

Good dates: 1, 3 and 4 Lucky numbers: 2, 5 and 7 Favourable direction: South-East.



March) This week will prove . moderately lucky provided you avoid extravagance Chariness will yield good

results. You are likely to change your job or residence. Businessmen will be able. to finalise new contracts. Be tactful in dealing with those in authority. Keep a eye on your health Your relationship with your spouse is likely to improve.

Good dates: 29, 1 and 3 Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 4. Favourable direction: North-East



PISCES (15 March-14 April) A good time to travel. A sudden change of place or

promotion is likely. However, by the end of this week

you will be faced with serious obstacles and delays. Romance may lead to increased expenditure. You are likely to invite misunderstandings with others.

Good dates: 30, 31 and 2 Lucky numbers: 3, 6 and 9. Favourable direction: West.

For those born on Fridays: You are naturally endowed with artistic sensibility. Hence you will attain prominence in professions connected with art, crafts or literature. You are also passionate by nature and this will create in you a strong desire for the other sex; there is also a likelihood that you may even have extramarital affairs. Hence a word of caution: try to spend most of your time on work. For those in search of brides, girls born on Sundays or Thursdays will make good matches.

THE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Kheas Baat

Chetrughen Sinha is now Ofacing a major crisis in his career which was going rather well till recently. At least three films, which he had announced to everyone would do a world of good to his sagging career crashed miserably at the box-office. In fact, one big film *Ganga Meri Maa* couldn't run for even three weeks. And so Shatru has become "a very risky proposition" in the market. Financiers and distributors are not willing to put their money on films which just have him as the hero. Which means he will only be asked to play in multi-starrers.



Moushumi: slander victim

Has Moushumi Charter-jee's loud mouth come in the way of her success story? The way things are now, there can be no other reason. Moushumi still looks young and beautiful in spite of two children and her talent can never be underestimated. She has proved it time and again. Then why has she not been given the right opportunities? In fact, Moushumi herself has started wondering. "I am much better than many of the ruling actresses. I can prove myself in any kind of role but where are the opportunities? People say they are scared of my tantrums and my moods. I can't understand who has spread these stories? They don't realise how such stories harm one's career." says Moushumi. There are just three Moushumi starrers on the floor and unfortunately not one of them is . making any progress the way they should.

AND THE RESERVE



Jeetendra: Sridevi's:flame?

It had to happen. Jeeten-dra signed just one film with Sridevi, Himmatwala and it was a major hit all over the country. Soon the team became one of the most salable pairs. They have already signed some seven or eight big Hindi films in the south. Sridevi is thinking of cutting down drastically on her assignments in the south, as Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam filmmakers wring their hands in anxiety. And, of course, stories about Jeetu and Sridevi having a roaring affair are already on the grapevine.

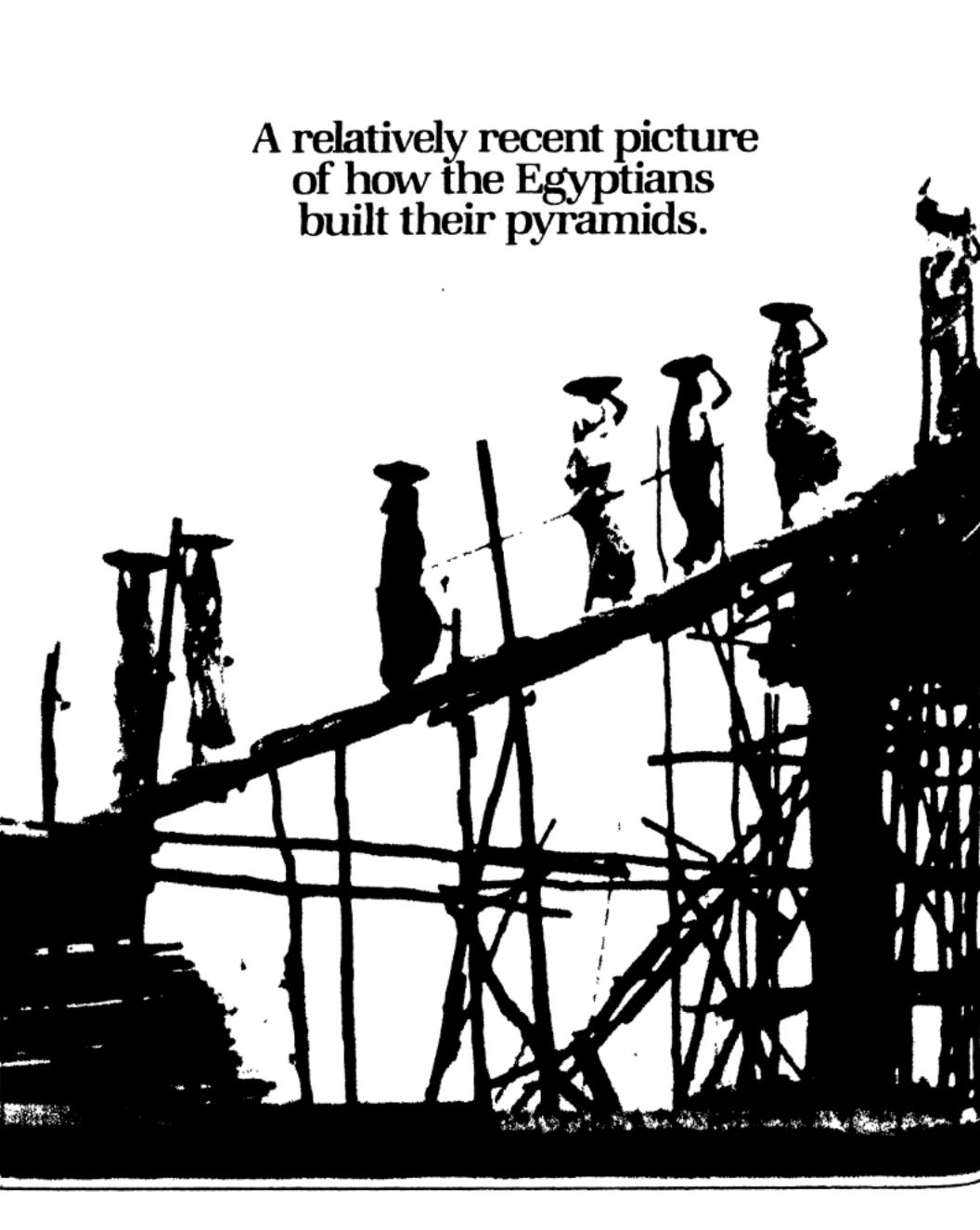
Poor Kamalahasan. There was a time soon after the phenomenal success of Ek Duuje Ke Liye when producers and directors from Bombay took the first available flight to Madras with bags full of money. All of them wanted to sign the handsome new actor for their future films. But Kamal was very busy and selected only those roles which he felt would help him. Then came the same K. Balachander's Zara Si Zindagi which flopped badly. There was panic and pandemonium all around. They said that Kamalahasan was no good. Those who had signed him repented; those who didn't, thanked their lucky stars. And now Kamai urgently needs a hit in Hindi films. Will Sadma help him out?

And the way people who have seen Sadma (starring Kamalahasan and Sridevi and directed by Balu Mahendra) are talking about Silk Smita from the south proves only one thing. She has made an impact with her sex appeal, and tantalising dance. Stiff competition ahead for the reigning girls like Kalpana Iyer, Prema Narayan and Arpana Chowdhury.

The conquest for Jayaprada is complete and
the way things are going
for her it is almost certain
that she will say or will be
forced to say goodbye to
the South and all those
films in the languages
being made there. The
way she is bagging roles,
banners and heroes in
Bombay she has given the
jitters to many heroines in
the Hindi film industry.

Silk Smita: sex appeal







Built with 2,300,000 blocks of stone—averaging 1½ tonnes each—the Pyramid of Cheops is classed as one of seven wonders of the ancient world.

A force of 100,000 worked continuously until the last block was slotted intwenty years later.

4500 years later, the picture hasn't changed very much.

Witness our dams, canals, industrial plants, housing and other giant projects. Employing vast labour forces, with a relatively poor ratio of construction equipment.

Today's changing needs demand acceleration—especially in vital projects so necessary to nation building.

And acceleration comes from a greater accent on modern earthmoving and construction equipment.

Escorts' involvement in nation building goes deep.

The Company sought to fill a gap between heavy duty equipment and manual methods.

Collaborations with J.C. BAMFORD EXCAVATORS and RANSOMES & RAPIER have resulted in the manufacture of a wide and relevant range of medium-sized industrial and construction equipment—loaders, excavators, cranes, tuggers and haulers—affordable and available to the small constructor.

Today, over 4000 such units are at work, building the nation.

A critical task that warrants speed in construction.

Because, unlike the ancient Egyptians, we don't have time on our hands.

But we do have the tools.



ESCORTS LIMITED Giving positive shape to India's tomorrow.

This India



KHAGARIA: Railway passengers in the Barauni-Katihar section of Eastern Railways are being looted by miscreants offering drugged food as pra sad to make them unconscious, according to official sources. The sources said that a passenger was found in an unconscious state on the Katihai station platform on 25 April 1983. Medic al examination showed that he had taken some drugged food. On regaining consciousness, he said he had been robbed of all his belongings by a fellow passenger who gave him the prasad. At least 25 such victims have been sent to the Khagaria hospital in the last three months, hospital sources said--Nagpur Times (A. K. Guha, Yeotmal)

BANGALORE: Indian space scientists are conducting feasibility studies to use upright cypress trees as antennae to receive and transmit radio waves, according to Dr Shiva Prasad Kosta of the Indian Space Research Organisation. Dr Kosta who had conceived the idea, told newsmen here that experiments were conducted to show that metallic antennae could be replaced with vegetation antennae—Hindu (K Vasantha Kumar, Arumuganeri)

MADRAS About 12 first-year M.A. (History) students of Pachaiyappa's college missed their university examination on 7 May 1983 because the college authorities had locked the examination hall and gone home, not knowing that an examination had been slated. The examination was to commence at 2 pm. The paper was on "History of India" (Part I). The students who had assembled near the main building, where the examination was to be conducted, found to their chagrin that the main collapsible gate was closed and that no college official was present. At 2 pm, there was still no sign of anybody around. It is learnt that the clerks of the college had misplaced the question papers on the

History of India and hence, they did not know that an examination was to be held that afternoon. So, after some examinations were held in the morning, they locked the college premises and went home—Indian Express (R. Venkatesan, Trichy)

BOMBAY: Students appearing for Bombay university's third-veat accountancy paper were in a quandary when they received their question papers without any instructions on them. The papers did not specify the name of the university, nor the marks allotted for individual questions. There was no rubric at the top of the paper stating the number of questions a student was supposed to attempt or which questions were compulsory—Times of India (K. S. Prakash, Bombay)

AHMEDABAD Homatmak Navachandi Yagna, a ten-hour puja, was pertormed to ward off evil spirits believed to be haunting a housing colony of space scientists here recently. Three deaths in the colony seem to have called for an urgent "spiritual" action on the part of the space scientists. A committee of ISRO scientists raised fund for the yagna and professional pajaris performed the ritual—Indian Express (V. Arons, Quilon)

JAIPUR: Raj Kumarı, a 13-year old inmate of the minor girls orphanage hostel here has become Raj Kumar after undergoing a second sex-change operation. Raj Kumari was first operated upon in August last year after hostel officials, perplexed by her rapidly changing behaviour towards the other girls in the hostel had her admitted for examination. Preliminary tests revealed that she possessed more male than female sex hormones. Doctors attending on her said that she could eventually marry and become a father—Deccan Chronicle (V. Anil Kumar, Hyderabad)

JHANSI Rananjay Singh, the police constable posted at the medical college police station here, is reportedly being followed by vindictive snakes who have been on his trail from Jaunpura, 450 km from here. He and his pregnant wife killed a snake which had bitten his sister in Jaunpur village while he was there on leave. On returning here, the constable received information that his wife had died following snake bite. When Rananjay Singh was returning from his village after performing the last rites of his wife, he found to his dismay the same five-foot long snake in his compartment. Last month, he found a number of snakes, led by a ten-foot long snake. swarming all over the place in his room. On 6 May 1983, the constable was again gheraoed by vindictive snakes. He has urged for immediate transfer to a safer place-Indian Express (D.V. Krishnan, Bhopal)

Without Comment



I have very good relations with Mrs Gandhi. Political differences do not affect personal regard—Farooq Abdullah in Probe

I advise Farooq just as any mother advises her son—Begum Abdullah

Here, in Delhi, there are already so many netas, so one more doesn't really make a difference-Maneka Gandhi in Society

I want to make it emphatically clear that it is not the intention to polarize the states into the focal point of an anti-centre attitude—NTR

I will not allow them (the police) to keep me like a rabbit in a cage--Lech Walesa

I have a very primitive feeling about walls. I like to attack a wall as if it was a battlefield. I like to paint on them like a caveman—M. F. Husain, the noted artist, in Indian Express.

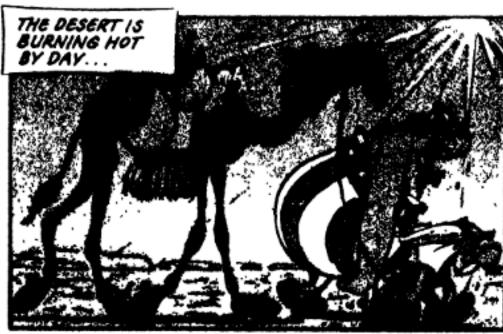
I think I should be stretched a bit more. There have not been enough demands on me (to explore my talent)—Shabana Azmi, who won the best actress award recently, in The Week

Telephonic communication (in India) is terrifying; it can take you a day and a half to get a call from Bombay to Delhi—Richard Attenborough

Everybody concentrates on the changes in organisation. Different writing paper, different addresses and names at the top—people get different carpets on their ofice-floor and different name-plates on their doors. I don't want civil servants distracted in that way: I want them to deal with the problems of the day—Margaret Thatcher













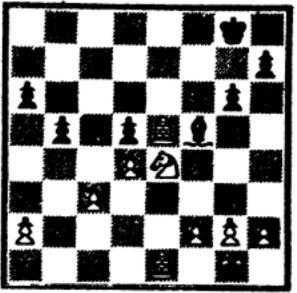






Chess

Mikolic (Black)



Van der Wiel (White) to move

The most coveted prize among chesplayers apert from the world chempionehip itself is the title of international Grandmaster. The complex and ever-changing web of regulations surrounding the title has in recent times become almost as difficult to fathom as the game itself, but the difficulty attached to becoming a grand

master can be gauged from the fact that despite the furfous level of activity in enternational chaes only four players in Western Europe succeeded in gaining the title in the lest year – and this was a record.

One of the four, as I mentioned in an earlier column, was our own Jonethan Mestal, but just across the water in Holland the new hero in shining armour is Jean Vander Wiel, who not only gained the title but acquired all the requisite qualifications inside nine months, a remarkable economy over the regulation time which allows five years.

Jean clinched the title by winning the international tournement in Novi Sad in Yugoelavie last October. His style of play is original and flamboyant if not a little whimsical at times, but when it comes to the crunch he can produce control and precision of play as in the following game which effectively won for him both the tournement and more importantly the grandmaster title.
White: Van der Wiel Black: Nikolic

White: Van der Wiel Black: Nikolic Ruy Lopez Novi Sad 1982.

1 P-K4 P-K4 2 N-KB3 N-QB3 3 B-N5 P-QR3 4 B-R4 N-B3 5 O-O B-K2 6 R-K1 P-QN4 7 B-N3 P-Q3 8 P-B3 O-O 9 P-Q4

One of Jean's favourite variations, foregoing the normal preparatory P-KR3. 9... B-N5 10 B-K3 P-Q41?

A sherp response, but not trustworthy. 11 Page Page 12 But Modi 13 PxN B-N immediately 13 . NxP? would also a piece to 14 Bull 14 N-83 BuN 16 Px8 17 R-KS P-83 16 Q-Q3 P-N3 18 QR-K1 R-R2 19 N-NS! White's build-up is simple and impressive. He now threatens Q-N3-R4 forcing new wesknesees. **B-84** 20 Q-N3 Van der Wiel points out that the auchange sacrifice 20 RxB PxR 21 QxBP P-B3 22 N -K6 Q-Q2 though superficially attractive appears to provide nothing concrete, but that he had missed the setounding follow up 23 R-K5II when Black defences start to

crumble. 20 . . . Q-Q3 21 Q-R4 P-B3 22 N-K4 Q-Q1 23 BxN+ PxB DIAGRAM

24 R-KSI RxR 25 NxP+ K-B2 26 RxR R-K21 Has Black just turned the tables with a sneaky back row trick?

27 QuP+ KxN 28 Q-R8+ No, all is well. If 28 . . . K-82 29 Q-88+ forces Black to block the K file.

28 . . . K-64 29 -54+ Resigns. The back row defence just evaporated and with it Black's queen.

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

There is a general suspicion, or superstition, that hands dealt by computer tend to be freakish, and whether the system should be used in important trials is doubtful. The advantage is that players and writers have an immediate record; the disadventage, that players cannot trust their judgment — or so they say when they haven't judged well. You may imagine the ululations after this deal had been played in the leading Australian team event, which was also part of the trials for international selection.

Dealer East Game all

A -
V A K 4

A K 10 8 6 5 2

A K 9 4

N

A J 4 3 2

W E

O J 9 7 4 3

A G J 10 6 5 3 2

A K 0

V G J 10 9 6 5 3 2

A S 7

Consider the misfortunes that might

befall either side – and in a big field most of them did.

Sey that South opens One Heart and West overcalls with Five Clubs. What should North bid? I think there is a good case for 6NT. Partner must hold the top cards in spedes, since you can see (or infer) where all the other Aces and Kings are. Some players doubled Five Clubs, taking 800, and some bid Six Diamonds. Now, if East passes as though going to his own funeral, should South bid Six Hearts? It is not certain. And Six Hearts can, of course, be defeated by Ace and snother club.

At one table East was foolish enough to double Six Diamonds. South bid Six Hearts and East doubled again. Now North tried 6NT. East doubled 'to save his honour', as he put it, and North was able to claim thirteen tricks after the opening lead.

At some tables - though it is difficult to imagine how the bidding went - East-West found a 'sacrifice' of Six Spades. It wasn't cheap; 1,400 or so after South had begun with three top spades.

I still haven't mentioned the most traumatic result of all – one that occurred at least three times. The contract was Six Hearts by South, 'possibly doubled; West leads the 2 of clubs; oh joy, partner ruffs and returns a diamond – but South ruffs high and claims the remainder.

TERENCE REESE

Stamp



A new series from West Berlin has an unusual theme. Each of the four stamps shows a different ornemental street pump dating from about the turn of the century. The pump on the 50-plennigs stamp (above) stood in the Klausenerpletz, in the Cheriottenburg district of the city. German stamps, including those of the old states, the former colonies, the occupation zones, West Berlin and the two Germanies of today, occupy 200 pages in the new Europe West' catalogue

C. W. HILL

Quiz

QUESTIONS

- What is common to Schafer, Sylvester and Holger Nielsen?
- 2. In music, what is a kitchen department?
- 3. Ships or planes in distress send out radio messages calling, "May Day, May Day." What is the origin of the word?
- 4. Granma is the official newspaper of which country?

- 5. What is Arachis Hypogea better known as?
- When does a university award an aegrotat degree?
- 7. What was the earlier name of Leningrad?
 - 8. What is Mithraism?

 St Peteraburg.
 A sun-religion which originated in Persia with the worship of the mythical Mithra, the god of light and truth. Groundnut.
 It is given to students unable to sit for their final examination on account of illness, but whose proficiency justifies the award of a degree without examination.

2. It is the term humorously used for the percussion section of an orchestra.
3 it is from the French phrase Venes Mai der meaning 'Come help me.'

1. They are all methods of artificial respiration.

VKSMEJS

4. Cuba.



Sunday crossword

No. 6 27

ACROSS:

- 1 Did Conen Doyle see this family as genuine dog-lovers? (12)
- 9 I load a den, oddly; how the voice is affected! (9)
- 10 Ken, the Spanish, gets confused in order to bend at the leg. (5)
- 11 Sounds like this map of hair provides material for rooting! (6)
- 12 Reflect, journalist, through a glass. (8)
 13. Lower—not necessarily by removing the foundation. (6)

- Cub scums in a riot—and yields (8)
- 18 Does she go around like a top? No mate (8)
- 19 The alternative left if you can't beat 'em (4, 2)
- 21 Where Napoleon met his! (8)
- 23 Ink 'ess' loosely for coils. (6)
- 26. These sheep have a right to produce prichers (5)
- 27 Not a Mana! Crazy, to get a sweetheart (9)
- 28 Done so fast, like a star? (2,1,9)

- 1 Tore apart last bed with sound (7)
- 2 Solomon's sweetheart was evidently a lady graduate (5)
- 3. Former score is in a mess-drives away the spirit (9)
- 4. Dive around for Latin vision (4)
- 5 Flower place, we hear, for this fabled pygmy-land (8)
- 6. Reeks addly of this glacial ridge (5)
- Charon's occupation—though not a doctor's—is concerned with delivery.
- 8 These dashing fellows must have been razor-sharp (6)
- 14 Showed rage with stiff hair and 500? (8)
- 16 is this time-keeping machinery invariably steady and regular? (9)
- ! Well, a is Milit get trou
- 18. Not necessarily a timber man, Tom's father. (6)
- 20. Gums tan badly for the prairie horse (7)
- 22. To do wrong again, looks like-obtained from sap, instead (5)
- 24. The Intelligence Quotient of an Irish party? But he comes from the Middle East ! (5)
- 25. One boy must be sorted out to find the painter (4)

Spinitions to Summay Crossword No. 5

ACRESS:

1 Knights 5, Embrace 10 Fume 11, Idealistic 12, Priest 13 Recluses 14 Flowerage 16. Often 17. Mould 19. Reverence 23 Sessions 24. Embark 26. Cantilever 27. Tick 28. Flapper 29 Dwindle

2 Neutral 3, Grebe 4, Twitter 6, Malice 7 Reshuffle 8, Chinese 9 Retrogressive 15. Well set up 18. Overall 20. Eyebrow 21. Caracal 22. Collie 25. Baton.

Compiled by Rita Tewart

WHO IS AFRAID OF BHINDRANWALE?



Bhindranwale: losing support?

IS the militant Sikh leader Sant Bhindranwale on his way out? This is the impression that some opposition leaders gathered during a tour of Punjab. When one opposition leader asked Sant Harchand Singh Longowal what he thought of Bhindranwale he declined to offer any comment. But one of his aides sitting by his side replied. "Bhindranwale ko paisa kisiney diya. Ham dono say kaisey ladain (Someone must have given money to Bhindranwale to make us fight among ourselves)." The opposition lead-ers, too, are unwilling to pamper Bhindranwale. Chandrajit Yadav, leader of the Janwadi Party, when asked why he did not meet Bhindranwale during his recent parleys with the Akali leaders in Punjab, bluntly replied: "I had gone only to . meet the leaders of Akali Dal and not to meet a blackmailer."

RETURN OF THE GUJARAT MP

HAS Ghani Khan's stock gone down lately with the Congress(I) high command? During the Assam elections he was among the key people the Congress(I) assigned to that state to ensure victory for the party's nominees. Even during the 1982 Assembly elections in West Bengal he had a considerable say in the choice of party candidates and was by and large guiding the election campaigns. But suddenly much of the responsibility for conducting the elections to the panchayats in the state (due on 31 May) has been placed on his cabinet colleague Pranab Mukherjee. Even in the choice of the candidates Mr Mukherjee seemed to have had a greater say.



Pranab Mukherjee: homecoming?

BAROT: IN SEARCH OF A PARTY

THE Rashtriya Sanjay Manch leader and once Rajiv Gandhi's blueeyed boy Maganbhai Barot, MP, is in a fix. He no longer wishes to remain with Maneka Gandhi. But then, where else can he go? So he has taken upon himself the task of uniting former Congressmen, now scatterred among the opposition parties, under a new flag. To begin with he met Jagjivan Ram, and later, the Democratic Socialist Party leader H.N. Bahuguna as also the Lok Dal secretary Satyapal Malik. If he succeeds in selling his idea then he can come out of the rut. But then, Maganbhai Barot may well have aimed at the moon.



Maganbhai Barot: aiming for the moon?

SETTLING OLD SCORES



Devi Lal: hate-Charan campaign

WHEN most opposition leaders in the country are wooing the septuagenarian Jat leader Charan Singh to make him join hands with them for a revival of the 1977 Janata spirit, the one person who will not stand for this is Devi Lal, former Haryana chief minister and once the most trusted lieutenant of Charan Singh. Devi Lal, evidently, cannot forget that he was thrown out of the Lok Dal by Charan Singh. Almost every week he brings out either a pamphlet or handbills accusing Charan Singh of one misdeed or the other. His followers have been asked to fan out into rural areas of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, the strongholds of Charan Singh, and spread canards about Charan Singh. Devi Lal himself has been touring Jat dominated areas with the same objective in mind: how to undermine Charan Singh. In the last few weeks alone, he has visited the Meerut division of UP at least five times. And he seems to be getting some results as well. Recently an emissary of the Janata Party president, Chandra Shekhar, had almost convinced Charan Singh that the Lok Dal should merge with the Janata when a Lok Dal activist from Haryana barged into the meeting carrying a pile of newspaper clippings. The clippings related to Devi Lal's hate-Charan campaigns. The talks broke down as Charan Singh quipped: "Do you want me to surrender before Devi Lal?" Devi Lal, who is now in the Janata Party, and Charan Singh have moved far apart.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN





I must have looked an electrifying sight— and a photographer snapped my picture

The modern art of Tingling.

Last week, I spent a few days with my spinster Grand Aunt.

Promptly she chalked out a tight programme for me. And first on the list was a visit to the art gallery!

The gallery was huge. Grand Aunt led the way and barrelled a path through the crowd

A blank white canvas with three blue dots caught her attention.

"Look at this," she whispered to me in awe.

I looked at it. Three blue dots in a neat row The title said 3 Dots. I counted them. Three. WOW!

I heard a soft voice behind me say distinctly "Three Dots". I looked over my shoulder and— POW!

A stunning young thing stood very close behind me.

She seemed fascinated with that crazy canvas. I coughed politely and said "Dotty, isn't it?"

"Huh," she came back to earth and froze me with a look.

Hastily I looked away.

Grand Aunt pushed on and I followed her, sneaking a look behind me.

The girl was scribbling away in a notebook.

Boy, she had class.

She was coming towards us!

I lit a cigarette and decided to play the art lover. I stared hard at the next exhibit—a piece of sculpture.

I let my jaw drop in open admiration, cocked my head a little to the left for a different perspective. Full of knowledge, I moved on, tapping ash into an ashtray nearby.

Suddenly, a commotion broke out behind me. I turned to see two gallery attendants gently wiping out the ash I'd flicked. Oops! How was I to know it was part of the exhibition.

From the corner of my eye I noticed the girl laughing into her handkerchief.

I was frowning at a little earthen pot, when I heard a musical voice behind me:

"Enjoying yourself?" she asked.
"Mmm. Terrific stuff this art,
isn't it?"

Then, leaning close towards me, she said, "I know of a real work of art. Interested?" My heart bounced around wildly. "Sure" I replied.

"It's an art. It's called Tingling." Her eyes were limpid pools.

I choked. "Tingling. But I never heard..."

"Your education is incomplete," she said, "Come."

I walked in a daze behind her.

At a nearby cafe, she bought two bottles. Tinglers!

Slowly, she opened them and handing me one, said "Take a small sip."

I sipped gently.

"Don't swallow! Roll your tongue around." I rolled my tongue around. Ooooh, it was chilled!

"Can you feel it? Huh. Can you feel the Tingle?"

Suddenly, it hit me.

A million tiny bubbles popped against my palate and a crazy sensation spread and began to electrify mc.

In sheer excitement I burst out: "I'M TINGLING!"

I must have looked an electrifying sight tingling all over—and a photographer snapped my picture.

I go often to the art gallery. Quite good I am too, at understanding the difference between ashtrays and sculptures



And whenever I get a bit bored, I whisper to Veena (that's her name) that it was time we Tingled.

And her eyes turn to limpid pools again.

Get the taste that Tingles!

HTD-MFI- 7854

Faroog Abdullah

Special Election Issue

The IBS IN BING





'I'm the Chosen One for clearer reception?

For transistors who cannot get distant stations sharp, Red Eveready is the answer. Red Eveready gets you even shortwave stations extremely clear and loud. Because it has a special EMD chemical mix which ensures super power and the sharpest clarity. No wonder 100% tamperproof Red Eveready is the Chosen One for clearest reception.

Red Eveready

The Chosen One. For your transistor.





The \$250 million scooter

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At home, Bajaj Auto vehicles play all sorts of roles. One of them is a little unusual: They help the Government mobilise public savings! In fact, right now there is more than Rs1,300 million in post offices and scheduled banks, as deposits for Bajaj vehicles.

That's our way. Always trying to do much more, much better.



Qutab Hotel

Canded at Palam 8.15 a.m. Zipped across to the Quiab by taxi. Ample time for breakfast. Thank goodness the Qutab is so near. The meeting was going to be a tough one. It was good that I could relax for a while. Nehru Place is just a 15 minute drive.

The meeting was super. 9 think we've clinched it.

1.30 p.m. Enough time for hunch at the Qutab with the GM and Jactory Manager.

A great success. They liked the steaks at The Grill and we carried on our discussions.

Ceft for Okhla, 15 minutes away. And Faridabad (which is just a half hour drive)! Impressed. It's going to work out.

Beeling tired. The green lawns of the Qutab were a welcome sight. Sat by the pool over a long drink.

By 7.00 p.m. was feeling quite energetic. Couldn't resist the 4-lane bowling alley. The only one in the country.

Took a look at the Service Apartments after that. They're ideal for the Company Executive and the Company Holiday Home.

Dinner at the Williamsburg Room with Indian and Continental specialities. It was the perfect way to end the day.

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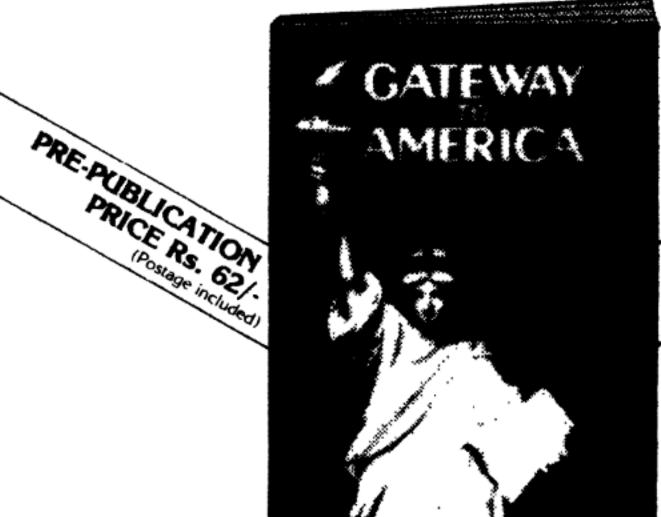
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Not a word spoken, yet so much said.
They call it style.



Rebuffed by the Congress(I), which had tacitly supported him as the successor to the Sher-e-Kashmir, Dr Faroog Abdullah faces the first election as the chief minister of the state on 5 June. Though the National Conference is likely to win the elections, it will be above all a mandate for Dr Abdullah's one year long chief ministership. Sunday correspondents provide an in-depth coverage of the election scene. Plus, an exclusive interview with Begum Abdullah.

Page 16

Mystery surrounds the death of 25-year-old Swetnisha Trivedi. an employee of the Bihar Assembly and adopted daughter of an important politician of the state. Though she was humedly buried within hours of her death, a post mortem conducted after her body was exhumed three days later shows that she died due to poisoning. Was she murdered? A special investigation by Saumitra Baneriee.

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NEXT WEEK

Prem Nazir: Enter Kerala's star

Plus an interview with the matinee idol

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R.K. Karanjia talks to Col Qadhafi

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Cover transparency of Dr Farong Abdullah by Sondeep Shankar

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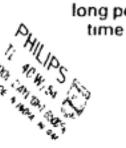
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same wattage. It is ideal for places where you need a concentrated beam of light: writing tables,

indoor games, etc.

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showcase, an entire wall hung with paintings, a large arrangement of plants or pottery and so on.



DHILIPS

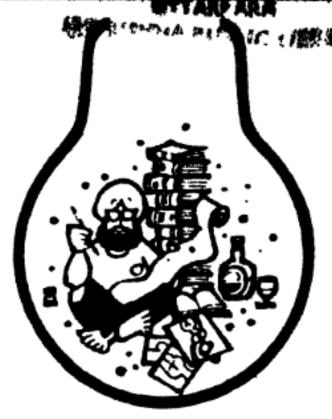




Planting a daughter-inlaw

y admiration for foreign intelligence agencies, notably America's CIA and the Soviet Union's KGB, has gone up considerably. An ex-CIA agent who spent many years in India has written in his memoirs that he had once bribed a laboratory assistant in a hospital to get a sample of one of our late Prime Minister's urine to make sure whether or not he was suffering from diabetes or something worse, and could thus help the agency to make an estimate ofhis tenure of life. When the students in Punjab went on a rampage because of a hike in the price of cinema tickets, the then chief minister of the state proclaimed that the CIA was behind it. Apparently the agency wanted Hindi films to go on corrupting our youth. The CIA is also said to be behind the troubles in Assam, fomenting Hindu-Muslim riots and now the Akali agitation. KGB operations are said to be on a much wider scale but we do not get to know about them for the simple reason that its agents are never allowed to write their memoirs. The *piece de resistance* of all foreign intelligence operations in India (we still don't know whether it was the CIA or the KGB) is their successfully planting a daughter-in-law in the house of Prime Minister Indira-Gandhi. Don't jump to conclusions; it was not a foreign Mata Hari who was sneaked into No. 1, Safdarjang Road, but a one hundred per cent swadeshi kumari who was let in with *shehnai* playing marital tunes. What is even more incredible is that the Prime Minister herself did not discover "the plant," as she described it, till five years after it had been planted and a-year-and-ahalf after it had been uprooted and thrown out. Or perhaps she thought it wiser to withhold this information till the daughter-in-law started making a nuisance of nerself. We may have never learnt about this nefarious plot had Indiraji not told the world about it. For this we must be grateful to her.

We are not likely to find out how this operation was performed unless of course some noodle of CIA spills the beans in his autobiography. But whether or not we get to know the details, it will go down in the Guinness Book of Records as the slickest spy operation ever performed. How a shrewd young man like Sanjay Gandhi could have been taken in by a gawky, ponytailed teenager like Maneka boggles the imagination. Perhaps Man-



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

eka herself didn't know she was being used as a plant. But the CIA, or whoever else it was, based their calculations on the theory that when a son gets married he divorces his mother. The poor mother becomes the other woman in a domestic triangle and since a mother-in-law (as many think the word implies), is a mother who makes the laws in a family, she outlawed Maneka. The nation must be thankful that this plot has been foiled.

Two questions remain unanswered: Who are Mrs Gandhi's advisers when she talks to the foreign press? And, does she pay any attention to the advice they tender her?

Heralding the Pooh Bah

The National Herald has slipped Lout of the hands of the Nehru-Gandhi family and is now firmly in the clutches of Yashpal Kapur. The slippage had started in the days or Chalapati Rao and continued apace during my brief tenure as its editor. On more than one occasion I conveyed my fears to Indiraji and Sanjay Gandhi (as I learnt had C.R. before me) but neither seemed to be able to do anything about it. The process was completed with the unceremonious sacking last month of its editor Hari Jaisingh. Now the irrepressible Yashpal has become a one-man trinity: he is chairman, managing director and managing editor, a veritable Pooh Bah of the Herald. (In case you don't know the word, it means the holder of many offices at once and is taken from

Gilbert and Sullivans opera The Mikado wherein the dramatis personae describes Pooh Bah as "Lord High Everything else.")

One must take ones hat off to Yashpal Kapur. He has done a lot of things in his life: taken down dictation, dictated to others, sold papers and grocery, ran unions, been a Member of Parliament, but has never written anything. Now in his middle Fifties and without any academic qualifications he takes up the editorial pen. It all goes to show that you do not have to know anything about journalism to become a peer of Verghese, Giri Lal Jain or Prem Bhatia. All you need to have is chutzpah (Yiddish for audacity) and you can do anything. May god put more punch in Kapur's quill: Allah karey zor--e-kalam aur

ziyadah! A lot of mystery surrounds this daily paper launched by Pandit Nehru to propagate his ideas. For many long years its management has been consistently defaulting in paying the staff its salaries, medical benefits required by the law, provident fund or gratuity. Contributors hardly ever get paid. PTI has suspended its service; UNI has to resort to arm-twisting to have its bills cleared. Water connections are often cut for non-payment. Every other month its workers are compelled to go on strike and the paper suspends publication. It has never had much of a circulation; it claims newsprint for 45,000 copies and extracts advertising rates based on that figure; it prints fewer than 10,000 copies and sells less than a quarter of what it prints. The rest is sold in *raddi*. Yashpal Kapur can console himself that he can do no worse than his predecessors. Nevertheless the *Herald* goes on acquiring more real estate, building new premises and launching new editions. How? Why?

Money for the poor

Listening to the criticism in Parliament on the lack of credit
facilities for poor farmers, I was
reminded of a dialogue between
two landless cultivators. "It is
zulum, said one, "Landowners who
have lots of money can buy anything they want on credit. But we
poor landless peasants who don't
have a rupee in our pockets are
required to pay in cash. It should be
the other way round: landlords who
have money should be asked to pay
in cash; and we who have nothing
should get things on credit."

should get things on credit."

"But if banias gave us things on credit they will become poor themselves," argued the other.

"In that event the banias should also be able to get things on credit."

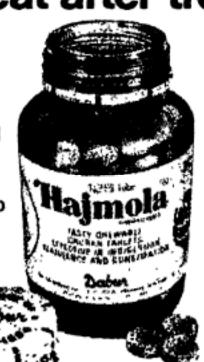
When you decide the menu and she agrees...



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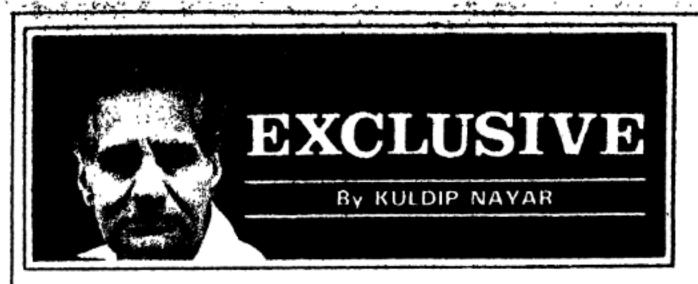
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Hajmola
Tastes good, acts fast



Why Mrs Gandhi is afraid of Maneka

have been trying to find out why Mrs Gandhi made the unpardonable remark that she was annoyed with Maneka because she had started wearing the clothes of a suhagan (a woman whose husband is alive) within ten days of her son's death. It was not a slip of the tongue, and even when it raised an uproar, Mrs Gandhi did not want to make amends.

My information is that the enthusiastic reception Maneka received at Amethi, from where Mr Rajiv Gandhi was elected after Sanjay's death, has upset Mrs Gandhi and the household. The womenfolk in Amethi were particularly unhappy that a mother-in-law turned her young, widowed daughter-in-law out of her house at night. (Maneka in her recent speech at Amethi had said that earlier she had come to them as a *suhagan*, but now she had come as vidwa.) It looks as if Mrs Gandhi's remarks were meant to counter sympathy for her, to play with the emotions of most women who do not like a widow wearing bright or coloured clothes.

I had thought Mrs Gandhi, always agitating for equal rights for women, was progressive, at least in the sociological field. Nowadays, in-laws themselves encourage their daughters-in-law, if widowed, to get out of the shell of grief and lead a normal life. Many even insist on their remarriage if they are young. I hope Mrs Gandhi is not equivocal on sati, and suggests that Maneka could have burnt herself on her husband's pyre.

I do not know how wearing a particular dress lessens the grief of a widow. Would Maneka have been more acceptable to Mrs Gandhi if she had gone in a sack-cloth and had shaven her head as some orthodox Hindus still do? And has Mrs Gandhi, herself a widow, done what

she considers Maneka should have done in matters of apparel? Mrs Gandhi, whatever her failings, has seldom lost her cool. In the worst of situations she has been found unflappable. But the last few months have seen her mask slipping, and she has started behaving like a person who feels insecure.

I am not referring to Mrs Gandhi's penchant for creating a scare by referring to "foreign elements" because people have become accustomed to hearing this. They know that she is in the habit of crying wolf. I am also not referring to her increasing tirades against the opposition, blaming them for the trouble in Assam and Punjab. Political leaders look for scapegoats for their failures, and her vituperativeness is explainable.

Everyone has got used to her stock argument that the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) in Assam and the Akalis in Punjab have gone back on what they had agreed to at one point of time, or to her observation that the opposition leaders have been saying "different things at different times." Even though both the AASU leaders and the Akali chief, Mr Harchand Singh Longowal, have said that Mrs Gandhi is "lying"—and Mr Kavindra Varma, MP, associated with the Assam talks, and Mr Charanjit Yadav, MP, associated with the Punjab talks, have singled out Mrs Gandhi for blame—one could say that all is fair in politics as in war. At worst, Mrs Gandhi may be seen as diabolical but not unsteady. But I do not know what has gone wrong with her now.

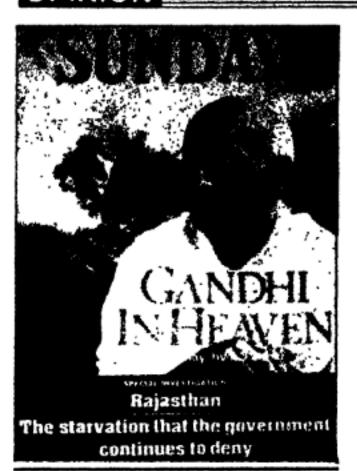
I have never considered Maneka to be more than a freak phenomenon, causing a bit of embarrassment to Mrs Gandhi, a nuisance, an amusing diversion in politics. But the observations Mrs Gandhi has been making in the recent past about Maneka indicate that the Prime Minister does sense danger from her. That apart, from this it shows that when it comes to Maneka, Mrs Gandhi loses her balance.

Mrs Gandhi's remark that Maneka did not come from a family with a proper background, when the latter was asked to quit the Prime Minister's house was bad enough and even the sycophants in the Congress(I) had raised their eyebrows at that time. A few days ago Mrs Gandhi made some more reprehensible remarks. To an Arab news agency, she said that "she (Maneka) was obviously put there by some forces from the very beginning and he (Sanjay) did know of it before he died." When I read this remark I thought Mrs Gandhi was misquoted because I could not imagine anyone making such an observation about a widowed daughter-in-law. But I was informed that it was a tape-recorded inter-

It was when Mrs Gandhi said at Lucknow too, that the marriage of Maneka with Sanjay was the result of a conspiracy of "certain forces" who wanted to infiltrate into the Prime Minister's house, that I was sure that Maneka had got under Mrs Gandhi's skin. Not long ago, there were two articles denouncing Maneka, written by Mohammad Yunus in the National Herald, a paper connected with the "household." A pamphlet, Two Women attacking the character of Maneka and her mother, Mrs Amteshwar Anand, is still in circulation and there has been no effort by the police to find out who authorised it.

True, Mrs Gandhi was opposed to Maneka's marriage with Sanjay but that was because of the "family" she belonged to. Mrs Gandhi was unhappy even when Rajiv Gandhi had first mentioned Sonia, her Italian daughter-in-law. Many mothers-in-law would behave the way Mrs Gandhi did. What she does not realise is that she is not only a mother-in-law but India's Prime Minister and what she says or does reflects the country's thinking. Even if she were to succeed in alienating the public from Maneka, I hope she realises the price young widows would have to pay.

On the other hand, Mrs Anand has been sparing no punches either. She told me the other day that the air-crash in which Sanjay died was not an accident - t was the result of sabotage. Why? She refused to tell me. Who? "It is for you to find out the people who were feeling nervous that he had become so popular in the country." Any evidence? "All has been destroyed." Family quarrels are messy but they become messier when the opponents are people like Mrs Gandhi and Mrs Anand.



Weak government?

Thanks to Madhu Jain for her revealing report and to Kamal Sahai for the stunning pictures in The starvation that the government continues to deny, (8 May). The government may continue to deny but it is a fact that the people of famine-stricken Rajasthan, the land of Rajputs, are advised to take capsules each costing Rs 15. If the government is unable to cope with the situation, then it will have to spend a lot on death registers.

Dr Jagajjiban Satpathi, Jatni, Orissa

Madhu Jain had done well to expose the Rajasthan government. Now we know why our government wants a new information order on the pattern of the Soviet media. Only few publications like Sunday are scourging the country to present facts as they are, and not as the government wants us to know. That is why at every opportunity our ministers chide the press for not behaving with restraint. Having said this, one should also say that population control should be undertaken on a war footing if we have to prevent recurring famines.

M. P. Jain, Howrah

Madhu Jain's report was so moving that it will make every human being weep in silence. It is a shame that lop-sided priorities of our government have turned Rajasthan, the land of colourful people and gallant fighters, into a veritable hell. Instead of adopting permanent measures, the government has all these years been taking half-hearted measures. He must be heartless who cannot be moved by the horrifying sight of famished children with wrinkles on their skin and protruding bones.

K. G. Jayaprakash, Trichur

Madhu Jain did an excellent job in exposing the miserable condition of the starving villagers. It's time that the government took some steps for helping man and cattle.

M. Anwar Azad Ansari, Bhabua

Many thanks to Sunday for publishing the searching and penetrating article by Madhu Jain. But what good is democracy if we cannot provide the basic amenties to our citizens? Nothing can change or improve until we develop a deep sense of unity.

Sirajul Islam Laskar, Silchar

Madhu jain has done a wonderful job in exposing the Rajasthan government's failure. While the centre has no qualms in spending crores of rupees in extravaganzas like the Asiad and NAM summit it could not feed its own people who are on the brink of death.

V. Rajagopalan, Bangalore

Self-advertisement

In his satire Gandhi in Heaven (8 May) I. S. Johar has pointed out very diplomatically the injustice shown to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in the film. I hope he will continue his fight against injustice.

A. Chaudhury, Rourkela

Congratulations to Sunday and Mr Johar for another interesting play. With his bright sense of humour, Mr Johar proves himself a very successful playwright of his genre.

Sukumar Dutta, West Dinapur (West

Bengal)

Against the backdrop of a serious film on Mahatma Gandhi, the author has by his superb imagination written an enjoyable play. Burlesque in character, the play proves Mr Johar's inimitable sense of humour. One began reading his play with certain reservations but soon the charactertisations won you over. I am sure even Sir Richard Attenborough would have had a nice laugh at the hilarious notes. But I wonder whether the play demanded a 'Sunday Special' treatment.

Vinod S. Mazumdar, Bombay

I became a Johar fan after reading Bhutto and Gandhi in heaven has only convinved me that he is the best humourist in the country.

A. S. Singha, Calcutta

The play was well written and Mr Johar has, through his biting satire said what many of us feel about the film. It is the first time that I have laughed while reading Sunday.

Rajendra Kumar, Bombay

Like many other Indians, I also protest strongly against the publication of the play.

G. Sukendra, Bokaro

It is distressing to note that Mr Johar has now started making fun of respected national leaders.

C. G. H. Khan Chota, Dharwad

Never have I come across any critic with so much of personal motivation as Johar. While the first page held out the promise of the play turning out to be a brilliant satire, it soon got bogged down in the mire of moronoic jibes and sheer buffoonery aimed solely at self-advertisement.

Pinaki Chakraborty, Calcutta

It was indeed strange to read I. S. Johar's play in your magazine. The play is the product of a sick mind suffering from innumerable complexes. Conceded that we Indians do not know how to laugh at ourselves—but the play does not arouse laughter—it only arouses disgust.

Rajesh Khaitan MLA, Calcutta

There are two people in India, Cho Ramaswamy and I. S. Johar who are out to criticise everything without making any positive contribution to society. Kindly ignore them

G. Venkatesam, Pudukottai (Tamil Nadu)

I am a regular reader of Senday because of its frankness and clean writing. I was however surprised to find that you had published a play by I. S. Johar who has a demonted sense of humour. Mr Johar's deplorable lack of respect for moral values, truth and goodness comes to the fore Please refrain from publishing such plays in future

S. K. Jam. New Delhi

I cannot understand what possible reason you could have had for publishing the play written by someone who desperately craves for publicity. He has tried to link every scene in the film to his views about sex. You are going to lose a lot of regular readers for having published such a play about the Mahatma.

Dharam, Bangalore

What right has I. S. Johar, who has not made any contributions to the country, to write such a play on Gandhi? By publishing such a play SUNDAY has lost its reputation.

Durjaya K. Sahu, New Delhi

Sunday has added to the controversy about the film by publishing the humourous but none too funny and unintelligent play. Gandhi is not a multi-starrer with the sex violence-romance formula but a venture to educate and influence the people on the values of ahimsa paromo dharama Alok Swaroop Sharan, Bombay

Such a juvenile play should not have come anywhere near a magazine of Sunday's calibre

Pradipta Kumar Sarangi, Bokaro

Mr Johar's play is an outrage on the sensibilities of Indians. It is in bad taste. Glorifying the play as 'Sunday Special' was not responsible journalism.

C. R. Rajamani, Tiruchy

I would like to suggest to Mr Johar to stop trying to gain cheap publicity by writing plays which are in bad taste. Rajat Taneja, New Delhi

If I. S. Johar had written his play a few months back, he would also have won an Oscar for the best commentator. All those in heaven would have expressed their anger against Johar and Sunday. K. P. Singh, Bangalore

Good intention

It is not true that the first wave of outsiders to Assam after the partition were mostly East Pakistani Muslims as Khushwant Singh says in Stray thoughts. Muslims came from East Bengal in large numbers in the Thirties when there was a Muslim League coalition ministry in Assam. It was mostly Bengali Hindus who had entered as refugees.

Khairul Anam, Dhaligaon, Assam

Khushwant Singh in his column (10 April) has with good intention mentioned that while Hindus and Sikhs freely visit the Hindu shrines, the Muslims do not visit Hindu shrines. His attitude is appreciated, for one understands that in saying so he is trying to foster communal harmony. Unfortunately some of our Muslim friends have used this as an opportunity for denigrating Hindu modes of worship (Opinion, 15 April). It appears that these friends have taken the cue from the attidude of politicians and so-called progressive writers that(1) to denigrate Hindu modes of worship is secular; (2) if Hindus put up with such invective they are liberal; (3) and if they don't, they are branded communal in their outlook. Is it necessary for the Hindus to discard their liberalism and treat the Muslims in the same manner as Muslims treat non-Muslims in Islamic countries?

K. Ramani, Madras

Baseless

This has reference to the interview with Gen. Ershad, I am unlike a military dictator. I am not a vindictive man (1 May). The allegation regarding the February incident was false and

I was personally present in the procession which we arranged to protest against the government's discriminatory education policy. At least 1,500 students from all over the country including Dhaka university joined the procession. No one was bribed by anyone as Gen. Ershad claimed. It was a voluntary choice of the students and all who believed in democracy joined the procession. Moreover, the procession was not at all violent. It was the police and the army who started to shoot. At least 49 students, including some girls, were killed and the police were prompt enough to hide the bodies.

In the next two days, thousands of innocent people were arrested and tortured. The army ransacked the university hostels; even girls were not spared. This is what is happening under Gen. Ershad's dictatorship.

K. Alam, Dhaka

Projecting Maulana Bhasani as a true Gandhian propounding socialist eco-

nomy was not correct.

I was in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) till 1972. During that period I had . heard many of his communal speeches threatening to throw the non-Muslims out of the country. He is a person who initiated the hate-India and hate Hindu campaigns.

Subir Kumar Paul, Siliguri

Khushwant Singh's comments on the non-residents' forays into Indian industries Sophisticated Brigandage, (15 May) pins the true motive of Swraj Paul. In an interview in London, Mr Paul is reported to have said that he was not interested in starting new industries in India because of constraints like bureaucratic impediments. He had also claimed that he had better managerial skills than Bharat Ram or H. P. Nanda. But now we suddenly find that he is more than eager to acquire controlling shares in many Indian companies. The reason for such a change of mind may be that he is spending someone else's money in his name. A thorough probe will bring out the truth.

J. Mathew, Calcutta

What Khushwant Singh is giving us in his Gossip column is nothing but hack writing. Is Sunday short of contributers?

Debu Paul, Calcutta

After going through Khushwant Singh's column for quite a few weeks I was reminded of a famous writer's words: "Once you get a name and start aging, you will become a egoist, turn vulgar, and expect people to read whatever nonsense that comes to your mind."

K. V. Sri Hari, Bangalore

CRPF is clean

It was stated under the Akalis de-monstrate their strength (News, 24 April) that "it was the CRPF which fired at most of the places while encounters between the Punjab police and the Akalis were few and far between." I wish to state that the CRPF fired only at two places on 4 April in Phagwara and Dera Bassi. Moreover, CRPF contingents fired only four rounds each at these two places under orders from the district authorities.

Since the information carried in a popular magazine like Sunday is far more credible than the statements made by interested political parties, it would be appreciated if the misunderstandings about the CRPF are re-

R. K. Khandelwal, inspector general of police, Central Reserve Police Force, New Delhi

Insinuating

The reaction of Balraj Madhok to the Larticle of Syed Shahabuddin in a way justified the extremist view of Mr Shahabuddin. It is clear that Mr Madhok still nurtures his insulting theory of "Indianising the Muslims" He is yet to accept the Muslims as equal citizens of secular India. This attitude is solely responsible for the emergence of such views as Mr Shahabuddin's. Why go far, just look at the attitude of your readers who attacked the article but none of them has so far said a word against Mr Madhok's insinuations.

Iqbal Badr. Bangalore

Gandhi and freedom

differ with Lord Wavell's comment L that Gandhiji "hastened their departure" from India as quoted by Madhu Limaye in Gandhiji's dreams are shattered (8-14 May). On the contrary it is for Gandhiji that India remained under British domination for such a long period. To quote Michael Edwards, author of The last years of British India, "The British felt they had little to fear from Gandhiji himself for they soon recognised him for what he wasan anti-Western reformer." In 1919, Gandhiji was in favour of cooperating with the British ray for the implementation of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. As late as 1927 if there was any leader in India who had not considered *purna swaraj* for India, it was Gandhiji. He even condemned the Madras resolution for complete independence (which was passed in his absence) as "hastily conceived and thoughtlessly passed." Thus the British domination of India continued to flourish under the protective wings of Gandhiji. Had not Gandhiji blunted and halted the freedom struggle, India would have attained freedom long before. Bimalendu S. Dutta Roy, Cuttack

Acceptable

martya Sen's article, Can India A conquer her weakness? (8 May) is quite interesting and acceptable. However it must be said to the credit of the government that it is trying to give a status of social equality and provide economic opportunities to the common man. Of course the methods adopted are slow and cumbrous and let us hope that effective and speedy steps will be taken.

K. V. Rajagopalan, Madras

The reason for the present stagnation in agricultural output is because we have not fulfilled our irrigation targets and also due to an estimated 22 per cent lag in the utilisation of the potential created so far.

Moreover our researchers are getting nowhere.

Jaydev Jana, 24 Paraganas

Amartya Sen's revealing article is one of the best we have come across in recent times about India's ailments. Community living and social consciousness is not our forte. That is why we find that ten million Indians have got out of our 'socialist' environment to migrate to a capitalist environment where they are thriving in an atmosphere valuing individual enterprise. Why is it that we throw garbage on the streets to keep our homes clean? The trend of individualism degenerates into utter callousness especially among the Indian poor. Women and children are neglected. In photographs from famine-affected areas we see only women and children. The male always eats first leaving a pittance for women and children. Perhaps if we adopt the western model instead of the Russian insipired socialism, perhaps a healthy turn could be given to individualism. Mihir Bain. Calcutta

The loneliness of the long distance runner

The succession was planned by Sheikh Abdullah himself. Yet, when Dr Farooq Abdullah stepped into his father's shoes after the Sher-e-Kashmir's death in September last year, he knew that a long and lonely journey lay ahead of him. For, he did not have his father's charisma; his brother-in-law, G. M. Shah, had not only turned against him but was actively plotting against him; and the extremists, who had been kept under the lid by Sheikh Abdullah were trying to stage a comeback. But the final blow came when Mrs Gandhi, who had for long been a friend of the Abdullahs and was initially instrumental in putting him in power, withdrew her support and refused to have an electoral alliance with the National Conference. With all these odds stacked against him Dr Abdullah faces the Assembly elections on 5 June: on its outcome depends not only his political future but the turn politics can take in the sensitive state of Jammu and Kashmir. SHUBHABRATA BHATTACHARYA reports from Srinagar.











ashmir is different this summer. For the first time in 50 years Sheikh Abdullah, the lion of Kashmir, is nce in the frontline of a battle for political supremacy in the state. After the Sheikh's death on 8 September last year, the mantle fell on the shoulders of his eldest son Dr Faroog Abdullah, whom the Sheikh himself had nominated to succeed him. With the help of the Congress(I) leadership in New Delhi, Dr Abdullah took over the reins. The long journey which thus began has now brought him to a juncture. He not only has to live up to his father's trust but also win the elections, which will be held on 5 June, to retain power. The task has become even more difficult with Mrs Gandhi turning her back on him. The Nehru-Gandhi household was once very close to the Abdullahs. Now they are the bitterest of adversaries.

When the Sheikh was on his deathbed, the succession plan in Jammu and Kashmir was drawn up by the Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, herself. She had flown to Srinagar on 5 September 1982 ostensibly to call on the seriously-ill Sher-e-Kashmir; but she spent most of her time with the Governor, B.K. Nehru, finalising the perspectives for the post-Sheikh era in Kashmir. At the time of the Sheikh's death, the main threat to Dr Farooq Abdullah's leadership came from his brother-in-law, Ghulam Mohammad Shah (popularly know as Gul Shah). When the Sheikh was seriously ill, Gul Shah had taken away 31 National Conference MLAs to Ganderbal, on the outskirts of Srinagar, in an open display of factionalism. But the way the succession drama was managed, Gul Shah's threat was easily circumvented by Dr Farooq Abdullah. However, soon after putting him on the saddle, the Congress(I) leaders in New Delhi were keen to test his loyalty. They put him through the litmus test too soon. And the era of bitterness began. Today, Dr Farooq Abdullah is not only opposing the Congress(I), with whom he had sought an electoral adjustment in his own state, but has emphasised his anti-Congress(I) role by attending the Telugu Desamsponsored opposition conclave in Vijayawada on 28 May at a time when the election campaign in Jammu and Kashmir was at its peak.

When the talks between the Congress(I) and the National Conference broke down and the Congress(I) decided to contest the elections against the National Conference, one had feared that as a result of this development, Dr Farooq Abdullah would take on an anti-centre stance which would ultimately end up in India-baiting. While anti-centre moves in other states have merely regional overtones, in the case of Jammu and Kashmir there is always a danger of anti-centre moves fanning anti-India feelings. But Dr



Jubilance at Srinagar's Lal Chowk: Supporters of the National Conference hall the breakdown of talks for an electoral alliance with the Congress(I)

Farooq Abdullah has successfully managed to keep his opposition to the Congress(I) and the union government confined within the framework of the Indian union. His identification with the opposition forces, manifest by his Vijayawada trip, is primarily directed to show that he intends to oppose the Congress(I) at the national level. Of course, he cannot stop deliberate misinterpretation of his motives by others. Taking advantage of the situation, extremist elements like Mirwaiz Maulvi Faroog of the Awami Action Committee have started clamouring for "self determination" of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. And in tandem with such demands, violent incidents have taken place in the Kashmir valley. Evidently, an impression is sought to be created that the ruling National Conference is not in a mood to tolerate political opposition. The facts, however, are otherwise.

The 1983 Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir are different from the previous ones primarily because for the first time, the elections have become the issue and past rhetorics against the state's accession to India have been driven to the background. The main debate today is whether the 1975 accord between the late Sher-e-Kashmir and Mrs Gandhi has been fruitful or not. In 1975, under the Kashmir accord, Sheikh Abdullah had returned to the state as the chief minister after 22

years of banishment and imprisonment by the union government. The then Congress chief minister of the state, Syed Mir Qasim, had stepped down to facilitate the process of normalisation in Kashmır. The Sheikh presided over the government with the help of the Congress till 1977, when PCC president, Mufti Mohammad Syed's ambitions for chief ministership led to the withdrawal of Congress support for the Sheikh. Mrs Gandhi, then out of power, did not approve of the move nor did Syed Mir Qasim. The Congress plans however, fell through as the Janata Party, then in power in Delhi, imposed President's Rule in Kashmir and ordered fresh elections. The National Conference swept the polls and the Congress failed to secure even a single seat in the Kashmir valley Syed Mir Qasim still thinks that Faroog Abdullah is Congress(1)'s best bet in Jammu and Kashmir but Mrs Gandhi's views have changed drastically.

The relationship between the National Conference and the Congress in Kashmir has had a chequered history. Till 1965, there was no Congress in Jammu and Kashmir. The National Conference enjoyed an associate status with the Indian National Congress and its leader (during the days of the Sheikh's detention after 1953), Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, was an invitee to the Congress working committee

meetings. In Jammu and Kashmir, the freedom struggle against the rule of the maharaja was spearheaded by the National Conference. When Jinnah propounded the two-nation theory, Sheikh Abdullah responded by presenting a garland of shoes to the Muslim League leader. The relationship between the National Conference and the Congress was such that both Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru felt that there was no need for a Congress organisation in the state. When the Kamraj plan was set in motion in 1963, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad too wanted to quit as the chief minister (then known as the Prime Minister) of Jammu and Kashmir. When it was pointed out to him that the National Conference, being an associate of the Congress, was not covered by the Kamraj plan, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad borrowed four annas from Morarji Desai and enrolled himself as a formal member of the Congress so that he could be covered by the Kamraj plan. Such was the closeness of the two organisations.

The Congress unit in this state was founded by the late G.M. Sadiq in 1965. The Congress contested elections against the National Conference in the past as well, but the acrimony which the Mufti-Kar team introduced into the Congress(I)-National Conference relations since 1977 was not there before. The present bitter Congress(I)-National Conference relations have made the 1975 accord a major issue in the

elections.

Some of the mischievous elements like Mirwaiz Moulvi Faroog, who had all along opposed the Sheikh's policies, have suddenly decided to extend their support to Dr Abdullah in the elections. And who is Mirwaiz Farooq? His uncle, Maulana Yusuf Shah, once shared the same platform—the Muslim Conference—with the Sheikh. When the Sheikh came out of it and founded the National Conference in 1938, Yusuf Shah continued to be in the Muslim Conference and a spokesman for the fundamentalists. It is now almost forgotten that after the split in the Muslim Conference the Sheikh's party came to be known as the party of the sher (lion) and its leader Sher-e- Kashmir, while Yusuf Shah's party as that of the bakra (goat). After partition, Yusuf Shah went over to Pakistan and for a time was the President of Pak-occupied Azad Kashmir. Mirwaiz Faroog who founded the Awami 'Action Committee and is now the head of the Nama Masjid in Srinagar, entered politics when tension was running high in the state following the theft of the holy relic from the Hazratbal shrine. Sheikh Abdullah had always kept himself at a distance from Mirwaiz Maulvi and the two families had for the past 50 years been bitter adversaries.

Initially, Mirwaiz Farooq had no intention of contesting the elections



The days that were: Dr Abdullah with Mrs Gandhi

nor dabble in them. But abruptly, when campaigning was half way through, he announced at a Friday prayer meeting that he had decided to support Dr Abdullah. It was just two days before Dr Abdullah was to tour the Hindu-dominated constituencies in the Jammu region, where the main slogan of the opposition Congress(I) campaigns is that the National Conference is a communal party. A few years ago, Mirwaiz Farooq's name was linked with the central intelligence agencies and it was a matter which prompted all sorts of speculation in Kashmir's political circles. The speculation now is whether Mirwaiz was making the statements demanding 'self determination' on his own or at the behest of some others in a well rehearsed move to alienate Dr Abdullah from the Hindus of Jammu and at the same time fan communal passions in the Muslim-dominated valley. It is a dangerous game that is being played in Jammu and Kashmir and it can have a far-reaching impact on future politics in the state. And the consequences may not be in the best interests of the nation.

The National Conference, however, neither in its election manifesto nor in its campaigns has endorsed any secessionist ideas. On the contrary, the National Conference manifesto categorically says that what it refers to as the "distinct identity of the Jammu and Kashmir state" has nothing to do with self determination. The concept, the manifesto says, "emerges from the unity of all the areas which constituted the state before October 1947." This means that the National Conference wants

Pakistan and China to vacate the territories of Kashmir now under their occupation. This clearly indicates the intentions of the party and should set at rest all doubts as to the possibility of the National Conference adopting a hate-India posture if Dr Abdullah wins the elections.

Coon after he assumed office Dr Abdullah realised that it was going to be a long, and lonely journey for him. He did not have his father's charisma, his brother-in-law was against him, and, above all, Mrs Gandhi having put him in power seemed to be withdrawing her support. This became amply evident when the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, B.K. Nehru, at the prompting of the Congress(I) government at the centre refused to put his seal and signature on the controversial Resettlement Bill passed by the Assembly during the Sheikh's lifetime. As the Bill came back to the Assembly, the choice before the new chief minister was either to remain a loyal son of Sher-e-Kashmir or go down on bended knees to please Mrs Gandhi.

Dr Abdullah preferred to fight for his father's cause. While this gained him popularity with his own people, he drifted further away from Delhi. Mrs Gandhi was clearly annoyed when the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly passed the Resettlement Bill for the second time against her wishes. Under the constitutional provisions of the state, if a bill, after being sent back by the Governor, is passed for the second time in the Assembly, it automatically becomes a law. But Dr



A change of heart: Mirwaiz Faroog addressing his workers

Abdullah did not want to burn all his bridges, and so he announced that the law would be enforced only after the Supreme Court had given its verdict on a petition filed before it challenging the validity of the law.

From the beginning Dr Abdullah's attempts have been to give his government the image of a clean government. In the last years of Sheikh Abdullah, the administration was virtually taken over by his son-in law, G. M. Shah, and the cabinet had quite a few undesirable elements. against whom there were charges of corruption. So, while choosing his cabinet Dr Abdullah saw to it that those in the old cabinet who did not have a clean record were left out. And following in his father's footsteps he got his decision to throw them out approved during a mammoth public meeting at Srinagar's lqbal Park. The crowd had endorsed

his stand with lusty cheers. Once again the crowd roared at the same venue on 29 April when Dr Abdullah announced the names of his party's candidates for the coming Assembly elections. They were, however, disappointed when they found that at least 12 of the candidates were the proteges of G. M. Shah. Dr Abdullah had to accommodate them under pressure from Begum Sheikh Abdullah, knowing fully well how his supporters despised his brother-in-law. Not surprisingly therefore, when he read out the names of Ghulam Mohammed Butt (the candidate for Habba Kadal), Mohammad Ashraf Khan (Shangas), and Hisamuddin Bande (Hazratbal), an enraged crowd began showering chappals. And after the meeting was

over, the young activists of the party who formed the sinews of Dr Abdullah's party, brought out a procession to register their disapproval of G. M. Shah's proteges being given the nominations of the National Conference. They did not stop at that. A section of the National Conference soon formed a rebel National Conference under the leadership of Mohd. Shafi Mir, who had been, till the parting of ways, one of the trusted lieutenants of Dr Abdullah.

The split, on the eve of the elections, must be causing considerable worry to Dr Abdullah. The breakaway National Conference, has put up a number of candidates. Some of these candidates were, till recently, among the hardcore members of Dr Abdullah's party. In at least 21 constituencies, the National Conference candidates would be facing the candidates put up by the breakaway faction. The Congress(I) too is not free from factionalism: in at least 14 constituencies the official candidates would be facing their own partymen who could not get the party nominations.

The main threat to Dr Farooq Abdullah in the coming months ahead may come from his brother-in-law, Gul Shah. Having given tickets to his men, Dr Abdullah has helped Gul Shah to stage a come-back. Following the rise of Farooq Abdullah in state politics, Shah has remained in political wilderness since last September. In fact, Gul Shah would have been the ideal puppet for the Congress(I). It did not take long for the political managers from New Delhi to realise this, as they found

out that the Jammu and Kashmir chief minister was hardly the Farooq Abdullah that Rajiv Gandhi knows as a friend.

Gul Shah is maintaining a low profile now. While keeping himself away from the National Conference's poll campaigns, he found time to call on the Congress(I) high command's observer, for Jammu and Kashmir elections, K. C. Pant at Srinagar's Broadway Hotel when the poll campaign was picking up. Though the Congress(I) is not willing to admit it yet, the anti-Farooq Abdullah strategy of the party is in fact aimed more at the post election period than the elections themselves. The fact that Dr Farooq Abdullah will get a sizeable majority to be in a position to form a government after the elections is not disputed even by the political managers of New Delhi. So, they are more interested in-finding ways for toppling Farooq Abdullah after the elections, rather than winning the elections. If the National Conference gets a substantial majority in the 76-member house, then organising mass-scale defections may not be very easy. But if Dr Abdullah secures only a slender majority, then a period of instability in Jammu and Kashmir politics is on the cards. And, Gul Shah, in that event, is destined to play a very important role. The National Conference stands a good chance of winning a substantial majority of 42 seats from the valley. But the outcome of the elections for the 32 seats from Jammu region is difficult to predict. Since coming to power, Dr Farooq Abdullah has made major inroads into this region where the National Conference had not been a strong force even during the Sheikh's days. The National Conterence is unlikely to win any of the two seats from Ladakh.

Apart from his own brother-in-law, another person who may pose a serious threat to Dr Abdullah is Abdul Gani Lone of the People's Conference, a pro-Pakistan Muslim fundamentalist organisation. Combining with the Jamaat-e-Islami elements, the People's Conference can cause considerable trouble for Dr Abdullah. Dr Abdullah knows this only too well. Hence his restraint while attacking the Congress(I) and the centre.

While analysing the politics of both Sheikh Abdullah and his son, one cannot help noticing that, like his father, Farooq Abdullah is both a Kashmir Muslim and an Indian secular nationalist at the same time. Even while playing on the passions of the people of Kashmir to remain in power, he is careful about not jeopardising the broader interests of India. The Sheikh, in fact, was more of an Indian secular nationalist than any of his contemporaries. He was one Muslim leader who could command his people as he wished. And yet he rejected the two-nation theory

of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The Kashmiris are hypersensitive about their distinctive identity. They, therefore, did not want to lose it by merging their state with the Muslim state of Pakistan. In October 1947, when Pakistan attacked Kashmir, the Sheikh organised resistance against the aggressors, and held out till the Indian troops could reach the valley. Had the relationship between him and Jawaharlal Nehru not soured in 1953 and had not the centre embarked on the policy it did in Kashmir in 1953, then things might have been altogether different in the subcontinent.

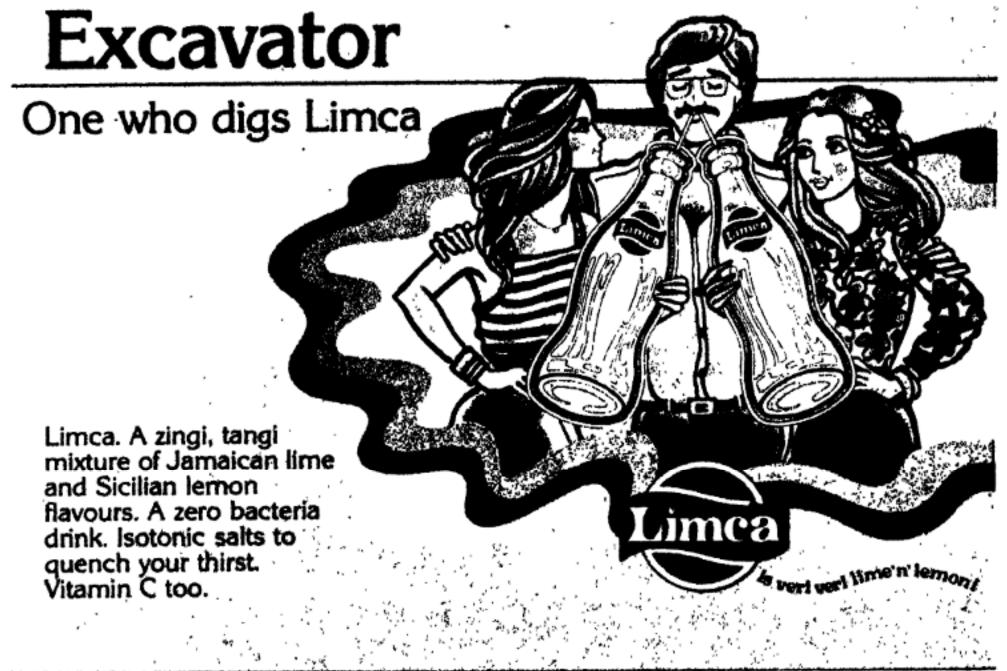
One criticism against Dr Farooq Abdullah which is being levelled by the political managers in New Delhi is that he has been playing on the local sentiments of the Kashmiri people. Soon after assuming power, Dr Abdullah had told Sunday in an interview that not only is the state of Jammu and Kashmir a part and parcel of India, but so also was the Pakistan-occupied areas of Kashmir which, he hoped, will "come to us one day." His main adversary in Kashmir politics, therefore, is going to be extremism—a phenomenon towards which the Congress(I), perhaps unwittingly, is pushing the state by its acts during the elections.

Despite his differences with the centre on issues like the Resettlement Bill, Dr Abdullah readily agreed to canvass among the Muslim

voters for Mrs Gandhi's party when the Congress(I) was fighting the crucial Delhi Metropolitan Council elections after its crushing defeats in Karnataka and Andhra. In fact, had the management of the Kashmir affairs not been in the hands of hawks like Makhan Lal Fotedar and Arun Nehru, but in the hands of senior partymen like Syed Mir Qasim, the present phase of acri-mony between the National Conference and the Congress(1) would not have arisen. But by its own choice the Congress(1) has driven Dr Abdullah to the opposition camp and he seems to be ready to play this new role with all seriousness. At the age of 47, the eldest son of Sher-e-Kashmır still has miles to go. But he has started off well. While the present phase of politics in Jammu and Kashmir shows some dangerous overtones, the national political scene has certainly gained a secular Muslim leader in Dr Abdullah. His ambition, apparently, is to play a role in national politics, as is evident from his decision to participate in the Vijayawada conclave of the opposition parties. This is a healthy sign in the otherwise murky politics of Jammu and Kashmir.

This correspondent accompanied Dr Abdullah during his election campaigns in his own constituency, in Ganderbal (from where the Sher-e-Kashmir used to contest) and in the Lolab Valley. Though in his campaign speeches, he attacked the centre for giving less developmental funds than is necessary, he never attacked either India or Mrs Indira Gandhi. He was always cautious in his references to the centre.

His election speeches began with a prayer to Allah that the 5 June elections pass off peacefully. He told the electorate that this election was the testing time for the Kashmiri people. "They think they can demolish the Kashmiri qaum (people). I believe in God and you too should have faith in Him. My father had taught me two things—to have a strong determination and to have faith in God. The intentions of the Congress(I) are not good, they want to purchase us. See the amount of money being spent by their candidates. If Mrs Gandhi can tolerate opposition governments in other states of the country, then why should not Jammu and Kashmir have a National Conference government?" His speeches invariably ended with a call to ensure peaceful polling and to maintain the dignity of the Kashmiri people. "Tomorrow also I have to work with the centre. so I don't want to create bitterness for the sake of elections," Dr Abdullah told me when I asked him the reason for his restraint in his speeches. Apparently, the marathon runner has a long-term perspective in mind. But can the same be said of his opponents?



Jammu: Dr Abdullah's stumbling block?

It was perhaps with the province of Jammu in mind that Dr Abdullah had sought an electoral alliance, first with the Congress(I) and then with the BJP. The National Conference being virtually unassailable in the Kashmir valley, Dr Abdullah was hoping to further consolidate his party's position by capturing as many seats as possible in the traditionally hostile Jammu region. HARPAL SINGH BEDI reports on the party's hectic campaign after it decided to go it alone.

lagued as they are with factional feuds in most of the 32 constituencies of Jammu province, the three major political parties -- National Conference, Congress(1) and Bharativa Janata Party (BJP)—have spared little effort in their election campaign Jammu is to play a vital role in the Assembly elections. The National Conference appears pretty confident of sweeping the Kashmir valley, but if Dr Abdullah hopes to consolidate his position in the state and within the party, he must necessarily put up an impressive performance in Jammu. For the Congress(1), once again Jammu is all-important if the party wishes to play an important role in state politic. The BJP, on the other hand, is making its debut in state elections, and a few. seats in Jammu would go a long way to boost its image. The Janata, which made an impressive debut in the 1977 elections, is a spent force in this region. The only other party of some reckoning is the Panther, founded by former Congress(S) MLA Bhim

Jammu city has traditionally been the stronghold of the erstwhile Jan Sangh; the Congress, on the other hand, has always had a firm grip over the rest of the province. However, in the 1977 elections, the National Conference made a clean sweep of the Muslim dominated areas, and the other constituencies were shared between the Janata and the Congress. It is worth noting that in 1977, the Congress drew a blank in the Kashmir valley, but it managed to win ten seats in the predominantly Hindu

belts of Jammu.

Perhaps the National Conference would have been happier if, as in the case of the Jammu municipal committee, it had succeeded in forming an alliance with the BJP. But according to BJP sources in Jammy, till the very last moment Dr Abdullah was 100 keen to have an alliance with the Congress(I). Whatever the case, the National Conference decided to go it alone in Jammu and it launched its campaign with a bang. The chief minister announced that the muchdecorated air force officer, Squadron Leader Rajinder Singh Chib, had resigned from service and joined the National Conference. Then Dr



Cashing in on her Jammu connections: Begum Abdullah

Abdullah decided to visit the holy cave of Vashnoo Devi and various other Hindu shrines; this was a calculated move to lure the Hindu electorate. Dr Abdullah also appointed Lieutenant General S. P. Malhotra (retired) managing director of the powerful Jammu and Kashmir tourism board. The appointments of Mr Sat Sahani, a veteran journalist, as director of information and Dr N. S. Pathania as director, health services, were also viewed as a ploy to woo the Hindu votes in Jammu. These moves by the chief minister did make an impact on the electorate but the advantage which he gained in the beginning were, to some extent, frittered away by his partymen who could not get over their internal squabbles.

One thing which surprised not only the National Conference and BJP but also the political observers in the state, is the emergence of the Con-

gress(I) as a strong political force. Although the Congress(I) is also plagued with dissension its state leadership has been able to bring back old stalwarts into the fray. People like Trilochan Dutt. Rangil Singh, Bhagat Chaggu Ram and Mohammed Ayub stil command considerable influence in their areas and that is what is worrying the National Conference. In Ranbirsingh Pura, where Squadron Leader Chib is contesting. the Congress(1) has put up former deputy speaker Janak Raj Gupta. Mr Gupta had won in 1977, despite the Janata wave, defeating Rangil Singh who has since joined Congress(1) and is now contesting as its candidate from Jammu east. (Rangil Singh's candidature from this constituency could have created further dissension within the Congress I . But before anything untoward could happen, sitting member Praduman Singh was made joint secretary of the AICC(I). The other Congress I aspirants from Jammu who were denied tickets, have been given appointments in public sector under takings.)

As for the BJP some of its members have filed their nomination papers against the official candidates. The party is divided into two factions; one is being headed by Rishi Kumar Kaushal and the other by Chaman Lal Gupta. One faction alleges that Mr Kaushal was too "soft" towards the Sheikh Abdullah government and that he was, in fact,

the "Mir Qasim of BJP."

The Janata Party is putting up some candidates but it will be a miracle if it wins (if at all it does) more than two to three seats. Its state unit president, Dhanraj Bagitra, is contesting from Doda district. The Panther Party president Bhim Singh is contesting from Chenani and Riasi. In 1977, Bhim Singh won from Chinani as a Congress candidate with the active support of Dr Karan Singh. That support is not there this time. In Riasi he is challenging the veteran BJP leader, Rishi Kumar Kaushal.

The position of National Conference in the Muslim-dominated areas is also not very comfortable, but observers point out that the legacy of Sheikh Abdullah is still so strong that the party will be able to make a

near-complete sweep in these areas. In Doda, a predominantly Muslim area, the National Conference had won four out of the six seats in the 1977 elections; the other two were won by the Janata Party. The Janata MLA from Doda, Mr Ghulam Qadir Wani, later joined the National Conference and is now contesting as a Congress(1) candidate; this has caused great resentment in the National Conference. In Inderwal, former minister and secretary of the Plebiscite Front, Mr G. M. Bhaderwahi, is again contesting as a National Conference candidate; he is being opposed by Mohamed Shamas Naz of the Congress(I). Mr Bhaderwahi is considered close to the chief minister, but in Inderwal again, the party is facing a crisis as two of its members, Peer Nizamudin and Noor

Mohammed are contesting as (rebel) independent candidates. The most interesting contest is in Bhaderwah. The Congress(I) has put up Hari Lal Hiteshi, a local Vishwa Hindu Parishad leader. The BJP has not put up any candidate, but its workers are supporting Mr Hiteshi despite the party's anti-Congress(I) stand. The National Conference has put up Bodh Raj Suman as its candidate.

Another important seat which the National Conference hopes to win is the one from Ramban constituency where its candidate, a former minister, P. N. Raju, is facing Jagdev Singh of the Congress(I). Mr Raju had won the seat in 1977 as a Congress candidate. A prestigious contest between the National Conference and Congress(I) is being staged at the Bishnah (reserved) constituen-

cy where finance minister Babu Parmanad is facing the vice-president of the statePCC(I)Bhagat Chaggu Ram. Babu Parmanad won the seat as a Congress candidate in 1977. In Jammu cantonment, the National Conference's Sikh candidate, Harbans Singh, promises to be a tough match for Mr Trilochan Dutt, a former minister and Congress(I) candidate. The ruling party is pinning its hopes on the large Sikh population here and on the Akali Dal which is lending open support to the National Conference. But Sikh patronage may boomerang if the Hindus decide to vote against Harbans Singh.

The National Conference's position in Udhampur is rather weak due to infighting. The BJP seems to be far ahead of the others. Its candidate, Shiv Charan Gupta, is also

'Who is Dr Abdullah to ask for the dissolution of Congress(I)?'

Unlike so many in the Kashmir § valley who have vehemently § opposed Sheikh Abdullah and then 🕏 promptly joined his bandwagon at the first opportunity, PCC(I)president Mufti Mohammed Syed has stuck tenaciously to his guns. Soft-spoken, yet ruthlessly blunt and fiery in his speeches, he makes no effort to conceal his hatred for the Abdullah family. Excerpts from his interview to SUNDAY:

: It is alleged that you were, by and large, responsible for the breakdown of talks between the Congress(I) and the National Conference on the possibility of an electoral alliance during the forthcoming Assembly elections. What is

your comment?

A: I don't think that I sabotaged the prospects of an alliance. Dr Farooq Abdullah himself was responsible. He had said that he was seeking the help of the Congress(I) to fight the communal and separatist elements in the state. There were a series of meetings. After returning from Delhi he said, "I have asked for the dissolution of the Congress(I) unit of Jammu and Kashmir." This was a contradictory position. The Congress party has been working here since the last 20 years. -And during the freedom movement, it was the Congress which had supported us here. So there was no question of dissolving the Congress unit here. My view is that the Congress, as an all-India party, has to stay and work here. It is the only party which has some base in all parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

Q: But a senior Congress(I) leader, Syed Mir Qasim, has other views on this issue...

A: What are his ideas? What does he want?

Q: He still feels that there should



Mufti Syed: bitterly critical

have been an electoral adjustment between these two parties.

A: I think after whatever Dr Farooq Abdullah said, doors have been closed. I think Syed Mir Qasim's approach has been that both should go together. That means the Congress(I) and National Conference should come into an alliance. But Faroog wants our unit to be dissolved. So what does Syed Mir Oasim say? There should be reciprocity. If the Congress extends cooperation, Faroog Abdullah should accept that position. Who is he to ask for our dissolution? I don't understand. What is the approach of Mir Qasim? what does he want? I don't think there is any logic in that.

Q: Why are you avowedly opposed to the Abdullah family?

A: I am not opposed to any individual. I have always respected Sheikh saheb as a senior leader. He was the leader of our freedom movement. I criticised him as the

CM and his policies and programmes. Even the present chief minister talked of corruption, malpractices and nepotism in the bureaucracy and his cabinet. He dropped most of the ministers from his cabinet and charged that they had tarnished the image of his father's cabinet. Then what is wrong in my criticising them? I had criticised only policies, not persons.

Q: What is your assessment of the present political situation in the

state?

A: You should have seen yourself. You are here since the last four days. I think as far as the people are concerned, a large number of them is involved in the campaigns. Such mass participation was not there in the 1977 elections. We have been working here as the opposition since 1977. We have been trying to give vent to the grievances of the people. We have been agitating for their problems. I think the Congress is in a happy position in the valley.

Q: What, according to you, are the main failures of the National

Conference government?

A: They have not given a clean administration to the people. There are so many cases of nepotism, scandals and corruption. Next comes bad planning. Whatever central assistance is made available today, it is not properly utilised for the benefit of the people. Not a single hydel project has been taken up bythe present government. Resources have been wasted on nonproductive schemes and on the construction of big buildings. You build an institute, and on the building alone, Rs 26 crores are spent. Why? They built a convention complex and again 26 crores of rupees were spent on the building alone. They have built a new High Court building and an Assembly hall.

facing Mrs Jayamala of the Panther Party and Balak Ram of the Congress(I). In Golgulab Garh, the sitting National Conference member Haji Buland Khan is having trouble: not only is he facing a Congress(I) stalwart, former minister Ayub Khan, but also a rebel candidate, Rashid Khan. The National Conference workers of the area allege that Haji Buland Khan has become unpopular in the area but the chief minister, to their surprise, has again given him a ticket.

In the Poonch district, the Congress(I) has put up heavyweights like G. M. Rajpuri and Mian Bashir, while the National Conference candidates include Rafiq Hussain Khan and a former minister, G. M. Ganai. In Poonch and Mander areas there is a large population of the Gujars and Begum Abdullah commands considerable influence over this community. In fact, she started the National Conference election campaign from Poonch district. However, the overall situation has changed following the communal clashes which took place in the area for the first time recently. The sizeable Sikh votes in Poonch can certainly tilt the balance in favour of the National Conference.

In Jammu the BJP appears confident of maintaining, if not improving, its position. The Panther Party is not being taken very seriously, but the party president, Bhim Singh, is confident that with the support of the youth and the working class, it will emerge as an important political force in the state. As for the National Conference, the lack of proper organisation is causing problems. The chief minister (who is also the party president) has tried hard to build an effective organisation by playing on the caste sentiments, but it doesn't seem to have helped. A majority of the non-Muslim candidates put up by the party are basically defectors and it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to establish their credibility with the electorate. The Akali support, which will definitely help the party in the areas where Sikhs constitute an important segment of the electorate, can also be used against it by the BJP and even the Congress(I) who can be expected to play on Hindu sentiments.

The clashes in the Kashmir valley between the Congress(I) and National Conference workers is being very subtly exploited by the Congress(I) and even by the BJP in Jammu. The clashes are termed as those between the pro and anti-Indian forces and it is being said that a vote for the National Conference will be an approval of the Resettlement Bill and anti-Indian forces. The National Conference is frantically trying to get at least Begum Abdullah to visit certain areas in Jammu, but so far she has remained stuck in the valley, thanks to Mohsina Kidwai and Begum Abida Ahmed.

The Jamaat factor

India, according to the Jamaat-e-Lislami of Jammu and Kashmir, is "an occupation force" in the valley. The Jama at does not accept the accession of Kashmir to India as final. Nor does it accept the 1975 accord which brought the Sheikh back to power. Despite its radical political convictions, the party found a patron in the Congress when it decided to contest the Assembly elections for the first time in 1972. In a bid to minimise the influence of the National Conference, the Congress left nine seats for the Jamaat. In the 1977 elections, the Jamaat came out openly against the National Conference, dubbing its leaders as agents

of "Indian dogs."

However, for the first time in its brief history (the Jammu and Kashmir Jamaat is not affiliated to the Jamaat-e-Islami of India), there are serious differences within the party. The Jamaat-e-Tulba chief, Tajjamul Hassan, is totally opposed to his party's participation in the elections. He has alleged that his superiors in the party refer to India as an "occupation force," and yet they are willing to contest the elections and to take the oath of allegiance to the Indian union and its Constitution. As a result of Mr Hassan's stand, the Jamaat has been split into two factions. But this has not really dampened its prospects in the three constituencies which are considered the stronghold of the Jamaat-e-Islami: Sopore, Kulgam and Homshalibug.

In the 1977 Assembly elections, the Jamaat's Syed Ali Shah Gilani had won by a slender margin from Sopore constituency. Mr Gilani is one of the top functionaries of his party. He-had defeated the National Conference candidate, Hakim Habibullah. The National Conference has repeated Mr Habibullah's candidature in the current elections. The Jamaat candidate is facing stiff opposition from the Congress(I) which has put up a traditional rival of the Abdullah family, Ghulam Rasool Kar. Mr Kar is expected to eat into the Jamaat vote

bank in Sopore.

The Kulgam Assembly constituency is attracting a lot of attention. Neither the National Conference nor the Congress(I) is in the forefront here. The Jamaat candidate is pitted against Mohammed Yusuf Tarigami, a youth activist of the CPI(M) who has managed to draw impressive crowds. It is said that the man behind Mr Tarigami's popularity in Kulgam is the Marxist stalwart Abdul Kabir Wani. (In mid-May, a CPI-M activist was

beaten up by Jamaat workers in this constituency. The very next day, the CPI-M workers forced the Jamaat to offer a personal apology to the victim.)

In Homshalibug, Jamaat candidate Abdul Razak Mir is locked in a three-cornered contest. (The Jamaat-e-Islami had won this seat in the 1972 elections.) The National, Conference has put up Abdul Salam Deva. The Congress(I) has fielded a formidable candidate in its PCC(I) president, Mufti Mohammed Syed. But Mufti Syed is also contesting from Bijbihara constituency, and his candidature at Homshalibug is being considered a ploy by the National Conference. It is being alleged that the Congress(I) has entered into an alliance with the Jamaat at Homshalibug, by virtue of which Mufti Syed will not mount pressure on the constituency in a bid to enhance the chances of the Jamaat's victory. In return, the Jamaat will ask its supporters in Bijbihara to vote for Mufti Syed. However, the PCC(I) president's campaigners have categorically refuted this allegation.

In all, the Jamaat has fielded 35 candidates in Jammu and the Kashmir valley. The party's main election slogans are: Kashmir ko Assam nahin bananey denge (We will not let Kashmir ko Moradabad nahin bananey denge (We will not let Kashmir go the Moradabad way); Jammat ko vote de kar Islami nizam ko vote deejiye (Vote for the Jamaat and an Islamic order); and Hamara leader Rasoolallah (Our

leader is the prophet).

The main thrust of the campaign is clearly against India and Indians who are "led by Hindus." However, despite its religious venom, the Jamaat has failed to cut much ice in the valley, except of course in certain pockets. The Kashmiri Muslim is essentially peace-loving and Godfearing. The influence of sufis (holy preachers) is almost complete in Kashmir. Traditionally, Kashmir has been the land of sufis and dargahs. The Jamaat has taken a rigid anti-sufi stand, and this has alienated the party from the Muslim masses. Moreover, the Jamaat is opposed to many of the social reforms that were implemented by the Sheikh and hailed by all sections of the Kashmiri society. Therefore, the Jamaat has to contend with a number of adversaries in the valley; the Congress(I) and National Conference are merely two of its organised adversaries.

Udayan Sharma

The history of the pinpricks

Or, why Dr Abdullah should distrust Mrs Gandhi

Even during his last days, Mrs Gandhi spared no effort to disgrace Sheikh Abdullah. But the centre's repeated attempts to humiliate him could not force Sher-e-Kashmir to play into the hands of the Congress(I) by taking an anti-India stand. UDAYAN SHARMA analyses the political jugglery that has often threatened to alienate the National Conference from the national mainstream.

here was something in Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah that the Nehru family could not accept. It was something which resulted in jealousy, shortsightedness and contrived tensions throughout the Fifties and Sixties. The Sheikh was pushed to the wall and forced to take a political stand which he himself never believed in; it was a heavy price that he payed for his domineering stature and popular base in the Kashmir valley. He was ousted from power in 1953, and for the next 22 years the Kashmiris were duped in the name of democracy.

None of the Congress governments in Kashmir between 1953 and '75 enjoyed a popular mandate. The elections held during this period were nothing but a farce. The accord of 1975 was inevitable: the Sheikh had to be reinstated. It was a compulsion for the Sheikh himself, for Mrs Gandhi and the people of Kashmir who had to be brought into the

Immediately after Sheikh Abdullah was brought back to power in 1975, the needling began. The Congress made its first move when it declined to support the National Conference's stand against the subsidy which Jammu and Kashmir had been receiving since 1953. Initially, the subsidy had amounted to Rs one

national mainstream.

and a half crores; by 1975 it had increased to more than Rs 11 crores. The Congress had tried to remove the subsidy altogether. Messrs G.M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim made every effort in this direction, but in vain. After being reinstated, the Sheikh announced at a public gathering at Hazratbal that he would abolish the subsidy before the next Assembly elections. He was clearly expecting the Congress to support him on this issue; but instead the Congress leadership chose to exploit the removal of subsidy and to belittle the Sheikh.

Next was the openly hostile stance that the Congress took after bringing the Sheikh back to power. Before finalising the 1975 accord, Syed Mir Qasim, deliberating on behalf of the Prime Minister, had assured the Sheikh that under no circumstances would the Congress withdraw its support to him on the floor of the Assembly. This assurance was made because the Sheikh was reluctant to form a government in a House which had a Congress majority; he was keen on fresh elections. However, assured of the Congress' best intentions, he agreed to form a government. No sooner had he done this that the Congress openly began questioning his integrity.

Unable to tolerate this, the Sheikh offered to go into a coalition with the

Congress. A meeting of Congress and National Conference leaders was convened at Srinagar. Dr Karan Singh, D. K. Barooah, P. N. Dhar and Syed Mir Qasım participated on behalf of the Congress; National Conference was represented by Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg. It was decided that the Sheikh would revamp his cabinet, inducting five members each from the Congress and National Conference. Sheikh Abdullah even fixed the date and time for the oath-taking ceremony, but Mrs Gandhi had other ideas. Those were the days of the Emergency: the Prime Minister and Mr Barooah were in the mood to humiliate Sher-e-Kashmir. After consultations with the PM, Mr Barooah telephoned Srinagar and instructed the Congress MLAs not to take the oath. The Sheikh was conveyed this message at the eleventh hour; he was told that since he was planning to induct a Congress defector, Abdul Gani Lone, into his cabinet, it was not possible for the Congress to participate in his government. The oath-taking ceremony had to cancelled at the last moment. The Sheikh felt disgraced.

The last nail was driven home when, in 1977, the Congress withdrew its support to the Sheikh's ministry. This was sheer betrayal. But the Sheikh managed to salvage

The death of a lion: Mrs Gandhi pays homage to Sher-e-Kashmir









The trouble-shooters: (Left to right) Makhan Lal Fotedar, B. K. Nehru and Arun Nehru

his prestige with a thumping majority at the 1977 Assembly elections. What followed was a relatively peaceful period for the National Conference. The Janata-Lok Dal governments at the centre did not necessarily see eye to eye with the Sheikh, but there was no attempt to destablise his government.

Mrs Indira Gandu returned to power in 1970. The Congress leaders in Jammu and Kashmir felt very uneasy when they found themselves out in the cold. The only exception was Syed Mir Qasım who eagerly sought a dialogue with Sheikh Abdullah Mrs Gandhi herself could not accept a position where she had no political leverage in Kashmir. She lost her temper on many occasions She even went to the valley to spit venom. Measures were afoot to repeat the 1953 experiment—by dismissing the Sheikh government. But Mrs Gandhi had no one of Bakshi Gulam Mohammed's statule to carry out her plans. Syed Mir Qasim refused to oppose the Sheikh.

There were many more incidents of needling and they forced the Sheikh to revert to his earlier stance, though this time he was neither hostile nor anti-India. He merely attacked and criticised the Prime Minister and the central government. The Congress(I) kept up the pressure from the centre. A 'red book' was published in 1981-82; it carried wild allegations against the Sheikh. This booklet was printed in Hyderabad for distribution in the valley. Just prior to this incident, the municipal elections were held in Kashmir. No partymanaged to get a majority in the Jammu region, and the Sheikh offered to go into a coalition with the Congress(I). The offer was ridiculed and then rejected by the Congress(I). So, the Bharatiya Janata Party was invited to form the municipal council. The Sheikh's offer was willingly accepted by the BJP. This was the limit: Mrs Gandhi launched a personal attack against the Sheikh. The then home minister, Mr Zail Singh, accused him of joining hands with communal forces. To

add fuel to fire the Congress(I) voted for a BJP-supported candidate for the Rajya Sabha seat, only to defeat the National Conference candidate. Then the Sheikh alleged that the party in power was itself communal. His anger was reflected in the controversial Resettlement Bill which he knew would prompt the centre to dismiss his ministry.

In 1981, the central government organised a massive income-tax raid in the valley. All those whose houses were raided were the financiers of the National Conference. Not a single raid was made in the Jammu region. Even the lone non-Muslim business house raided in Srinagar was that of someone very close to Sheikh Abdullah. These raids were a total failure. The income-tax department could not squeeze out anything, but the damage was done. The Sheikh began to believe that the central government was bent upon breaking up his party.

Sheikh Abdullah died a sad man. During his last days, he felt humiliated and alienated, but never did he think of reverting to an anti-India stance. While on his death bed, he once again offered his hand of friendship to the Congress(I): he

Mir Qasim: weak adversary



alliance in the 1983 proposed an Assembly elections. To prove his sincerity, he offered the Rajya Sabha seat from the state to the Congress(I). His only request was that Syed Mir Qasim should be the Congress(I) candidate so that the expectations of 1975 accord could realised. But the local PCC(I) protested against the candidature of Mir Oasim. The Prime Minister asked Mir Qasim not to persist. This was not the end: the Congress(I) made sure that the National Conference candidate was defeated in the Rajya Sabha election.

How Dr Farooq Abdullah tried in vain to befriend Rajiv Gandhi and arrange an electoral alliance with the Congress(I), is now a part of history. The times have changed, but the real irritants are still there; and the real irritants are the few Kash-

miri pundit bureaucrats.

Pandit Nehru had a weakness for Kashmiri pundits. Many of them were inducted into the Indian bureaucracy, regardless of whether they were truly fit to run the administration. However, it would be wrong to say that all Kashmiri pundits were opposed to the Sheikh. Many of the pundits who came from the rural areas, loved and respected the Sheikh. The Sheikh's ouster in 1953 was engineered by a handful of influential pundits who were close to Nehru. Even today, the Kouls, Nehrus, Dhars, Tikkus, Fotedars, and their like, continue to influence the Prime Minister and Rajiv Gandhi on issues related to Kashmir. A confrontation between the Abdullah family and Mrs Gandhi suits their interests admirably. A case in point is the present Governor of Kashmir, Mr B. K. Nehru. Today Mr Nehru is the prime irritant as far as Dr Abdullah is concerned. It is rumoured that Mr Nehru is very eager to become another Tapase. He has lost his credibility in the Kashmir valley simply because, instead of performing his normal duties as Governor of the state, Mr Nehru has been trying to project himself as the "agent" of Mrs Gandhi.

'Mrs Gandhi does not care for the people of Kashmir'

Begum AKBAR JAHAN ABDULLAH tells UDAYAN SHARMA

Begum sahiba, after Sheikh sahib's demise you are the seniormost political figure in the Kashmir valley. What is your assessment of the election pros-

pects of your party.

A: I am sure that prospects are very bright, although, you must have heard that a lot of money has been poured into the valley from the centre. This money is being distributed in the valley to muster canvassors for the Congress(I). Till 1965 there was no Congress in Jammu and Kashmir. In those days we were in exile; then Shafi Qureshi started the Congress party in the state. Even Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru did not start the Congress here. Gandhiji had said that there was no need to have a party here because the National

Conference was strong enough? under the lead & ership of Sher.e. Kashmir. He was one of the greatest[®] social workers, secular and democratic. The Congress(I) talks of democracy and socialism. But see, what is happening in Assam, Moradabad, Baroda and many other places. If this is what they mean by democracy and secularism then it is very dangerous for India and for all the states. In our state, Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and Christians all live in harmony. We are a peace-loving people. Even in

1947 when there was bloodshed in many parts of India there was absolute peace here. Neither the Jana Sangh nor the Jamaat-e-Islami could make any dents here. My husband was strictly against communalism. He was the only one who could push back the Kabailis who had invaded Kashmir. They had come up to Chattarbal, hardly 10 kilometres from Srinagar Who else could have stopped them?

Q: During the last three or four days I have heard from the National Conference activists that the Congress(I), the Peoples' Conference and the Jamaat-e-Islami have secretly joined hands. Could this be true? In the absence of Sheikh Abdullah how are you going to face them?

A: Yes, this is true. We will face

them with the same ideals and with the same spirit which were given to us by Sheikh sahib. I have been in public service for 47 years, right from the age of 17. My husband taught us to stand up against communalism, against discrimination and against slavery. During the days of the zamindars people here lived and died like animals. Money lenders squeezed the life out of the poor: for just 20 or 25 rupees they were treated like slaves for generations. My husband came out and said, 'nothing doing. All this has got to be stopped.' He wanted to free them all. He told the then raja to quit Kashmir. He said it, and it was. done. His movement freed poor people from bonded slavery and from the clutches of money lenders and

Mrs Gandhi and Begum Abdullah at Sheikh's funeral

zamindars. You cannot imagine how much difficulties he had to face in 1941-42

Sher -e-Kashmir was like an angel sent by God, like our farishtas who have come from time to time to salvage us and awaken us. In the same way Sheikh sahib taught us to be self reliant. It is because of his leadership, and his ideals that we have become bold. Now the people of this state are not afraid of anything, even if they be cannons. We will be able to fight against any evil and any disruptive force with the help of Sher-e-Kashmir's ideals. It will be a great mistake on their part if they (Jamaat-e-Islami etc.) feel that since Sher-e-Kashmir is no longer in the valley they can do anything. These forces cannot make Kashmir a

colony.

I will give you an example of how Sher-e-Kashmir helped all of us to develop and grow. When I was a little girl, it was a crime for a girl to attend a school and as a result I had to do my schooling outside Kashmir. Even Sheikh sahib had to go to Uttar Pradesh for studies. There were no schools for girls in this state. Now you see so many colleges here. It is because of Sheikh sahib that Srinagar has become a big centre for education. You can now find many well-educated girls here. Now there is a lot of education and awakening among the Kashmiri women. You will see that girls have come out in public. I was first to come out in public. My husband always said that Kashmir was a garden with different

variety of flowers. He set an example in communal harmony. Then came the Pakistanis with their twonation theory. "Go back. You will never succeed in implementing this theory in Kashmir. We know how to protect ourselves,' was the Sheikh's answer to them. They came with guns in 1947. My husband said we will have to come out. At that time there was no army here. Sheikh sahib asked us to get trained. I was also trained along with hundreds of Kashmiris by a retired general from the

army. Young girls and boys volunteered to fight the invaders.

When my husband told the Kashmiris that he was going to remove subsidy, people told him, "Adhi roti khayenge, sir nahin jhukayenge" (We will have half a loaf but will not bow our heads). Former rulers were deceiving the people of Kashmir in the name of subsidy. For centuries the people of Kashmir had been exploited. Sikh rulers came here and behaved in the same way. Mughals also exploited the local people treating them like slaves and using our beautiful girls in their harems. All such things used to happen here before the movement launched by Sheikh shahib. Now that we are trying to make progress, my son Farooq asked Mrs Gandhi for help.

She just does not care for the people of this state. But I can tell you that Sher-e-Kashmir has taught us how to fight back to defend our honour and peace. Our slogan is "Sheikh saheb ka kya Irshad, Hindu Sikh Muslim ittehad."

Q: How would you describe your family's relationship with the Nehru-Gandhi family? How is the relation between Dr Abdullah and

Rajiv Gandhi like now?

A: Our relations had always been very cordial. But as I have told you my son, the politics of India now is very much different from what it was. Same is the case with the politicians. Gandhiji was there, Jawaharlalji was there, Maulana Azad was there, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was there. My husband worked with them. These leaders were far far superior.

Rajiv Gandhi is also trying to establish himself as a leader of consequence. We don't hear much of his contributions because his mother is strong and overshadows him. But the

manner in which he handled Kashmir? Oh! Poor young man. He is surrounded by such a circle of people who are just interested in themselves. Neither they are interested in India nor in the welfare of any state.

Q: Does not he know the mess which the J&K PCC(I) is in?

A: I hope he does. But this caucus is not only encircling Rajiv but his mother also. To work under the influence of others who do not stand for not a good sign for

the future. They think that they are doing wonders, but I feel very sorry for them. Because it is the people who suffer. Here, we are affected people of our state are affected because we are wedded to the principle of democracy, socialism and

secularism.

I have always told Farooq, 'Look one has many acquaintances in the world: Sheikh Sahib had also hundreds of friends but he never allowed them to dictate politics to him.' Nothing doing. But my friend Indira Gandhi and her son have allowed them to be dictated by people who hardly have any credibility. Personal friendship and politics are two separate things. Never mix them. Rajiv is a young man like Faroog. Faroog from his father's

time has learnt many lessons. Rajiv came and touched my feet. I blessed him. His advisers are very bad. I was talking about Farooq. I told Farooq about one of his friends Mir Mustafa. I told him that this man was fishy, don't mix friendship with politics. This was his first and last misjudgment. See, Mir Mustafa is contesting against our own man.

Q: What is your assessment of Dr

Farooq Abdullah?

A: Every mother will always praise her son. But I am not one of those mothers. I can only say that he is a worthy successor of Sher-e-Kashmir. Just after the death of my husband, there was a function at a local women's college. A local young writer praised Faroog and said that now he was here to lead us. Then I had said, "Look, he is yet to prove his mettle. He will have to prove his worth." I said it in a function. But now I can say that he has inherited his father's qualities. He has proved his mettle. He has the same principles which were propounded by his father. Farooq had successfully led

any principle is (L to R) The Sheikh with wife and daughters Suraya and Khalida

the agitation against the theft of sacred relics. Like his father he is working for the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity. Right from the very beginning he had feelings for the poor. He is also facing the same problem from the centre which piqued his father. Once Sheikh Sahib said in a meeting, "If a chief minister wants to sneeze, he must go to Delhi for this. This is the situation." Faroog is also facing money. Lots of the power of money is flowing in just to create tension and violence and arson. Suitcases full of notes are being brought in; hundreds of jeeps have come. The hotel Broadway has become the den. God knows where this money goes.

Q: Shall I ask you two personal questions? Why is G.M. Shah, your son-in-law, not canvassing for your

party? Is he dissatisfied?

A: He is very hot tempered. But he has some excellent qualities. The other day he told me that he was above sixty and wanted to retire from politics. I told him that there were many people of his age who were serving the people well. "Look at your papa (the Sheikh). He worked till the last. He fell ill only twice in his lifetime: once, for three weeks in 1977 and then, for two weeks this time when he passed away. He (Sheikh) never thought of retiring. Shah comes and chats with me. But he is short tempered. One who is short tempered loses his mental balance. I tell him that to lose one's temper is a sin. I feel sorry for him.

Q: How did your last meeting with Mrs Gandhi go?

A: It was quite all right. She came when my husband was sick. After his passing away she stayed here, came here and sat with me. She consoled us. She was very nice to me.

Q: Can you describe your first meeting with Sheikh Sahib?

A: That was in 1932 or '33. I was on a holiday here with my parents. This Nedous motel belonged to my father. He came to collect some fund or as you say chanda leney . My mother who was a Kashmiri told me that this young man was like an angel for the Kashmiris. He was fighting for their rights. I asked her, "What angel mother?" She told me that she was talking about Sheikh Abdullah. She told me he was very bold. Then I asked her what was he doing. I was told that he was

struggling against the raja for people's rights. I was only a young girl of 16 or 17. I said, "You can't go there where your father is sitting with those men." Even then I had a glimpse of him. He was very slim. Then, I heard him talk. Somebody talked with him and after this a person who belonged to my mother's area talked to my mother. My mother consulted my father. Then Sheikh Sahib met my father, who was a bit hesitant because of Sheikh Sahib's involvement with the movement against the raja. My father said, 'Oh God! This man is going to spend his whole life in jail. What will happen to my little girl?' But my mother was in favour of this marriage. Today I feel that I am the luckiest woman to have such a great man as my husband.

Why did Swetnisha die?

Among her admirers were ministers, politicians and civil servants. They would do anything for Swetnisha Trivedi, the 25-year-old, vivacious typist at the Bihar Assembly secretariat in Patna. And then, she suddenly died in the early hours of 8 May at the residence of her foster-mother, Rajeshwari Saroj Das, MLC and a former deputy chairman of the Bihar Legislative Council. It was odd that the two doctors who issued separate death certificates did not agree on the cause of her death: one thought she died of internal haemorrhage, the other settled for cardiac arrest. Intrigued by this, Patna's senior superintendent of police, Kishore Kunal, exhumed her body three days after she had been buried. The post mortem reports said that she died due to poisoning and had met a violent end. The obvious conclusion was that it was a murder most foul. With the reputation of a number of influential people at stake, efforts were naturally made to hush up the matter. SAUMITRA BANERJEE went to Patna and found that Swetnisha Trivedi had to pay dearly for her fun-loving ways.

Che was young, pretty Dand charming. She was, or had been at some time or the other, friendly with a number of important politicians in Bihar, including some ministers. So, when Mrs Swetnisha Trivedi, the 25-year-old adopted daughter of Miss Ra jeshwari Saroj Das, MLC and a former deputy chairman of the Bihar Legislative Council, died under mysterious circumstances in the early hours of 8 May, the death did not go unnoticed. Instead a host of questions were raised: How had Swetnisha Trivedi died? Did she commit suicide? Or. was it a case of murder? If it was murder, then who had murdered her and why? Her close relations with both the ruling party and opposition politicians were well known. Was she then murdered by someone who was scared that Swetnisha Trivedi, popularly known as Baby, might have some incriminating evidence and might, at a suitable time, expose him? The answers to some of these questions are slowly emerging and at the time of writing the police are still investigating the case and the first arrest is yet to be made.



Swetnisha Trivedi: mysterious death

The news of Swetnisha Trivedi's death was first published in the 10 May edition of Aaj, a Hindi daily pub-lished from Patna. The short news item simply said that Swetnisha Trivedi had died on 8 May and the circumstances of her death were mysterious. Till this news was published very few people in the city knew of it-not even the police. Only a handful of people in the Bihar Assembly secretariat, where Mrs Trivedi was working as a typist since 1979, had heard of her death but none of them were sure of it. For, they thought, how could a person as young as Swetnisha, whom they had met just a day before her death, have died suddenly? Even when they had met her she seemed to be in perfect health. Her unexpected death, predictably, led to rumours about the circumstances under which she had died and it was after the news 🕹 was published that the Patna police started making preliminary enquiries about the death of Mrs Trivedi. First, senior superintendent of police (SSP) of Patna, Mr Kishore Kunal enquired from police stations all over the city



Rajeshwari Suroj Das: feigning ignorance?

about whether a case concerning the death of Swetnisha Trivedi had been registered with them. The answer was no. Next, Swotnisha's foster mother, Miss Rajeshwari Saroj Das was contacted and asked how she had died. Her explanation was simple: her daughter, she said, had had a rickshaw accident some time back and ever since then she had been suffering from a pain. It was her surmise that it was this that had caused Swetnisha's death. And, as if to prove her point, she produced a death certificate issued by Dr K.K. Jha, attached to the Assembly dispensary, which said that she had died because of "internal haemorrhage.'

It was the death certificate, in fact, which first aroused Mr Kunal's suspicion. His first thought, on learning of the contents of the certificate, was that it was a bit unusual: how could a certificate stating internal haemorrhage as the cause of death be issued without a post-mortem being conducted? And even if it was a case of internal haemorrhage, shouldn't a post-mortem have been ordered to confirm it? This, coupled with Miss Das's unconvincing explanations only added to the suspicion and the SSP decided to examine the matter further: he decided a post-mortem would have to be conducted to set the doubts at rest. He immediately contacted the district magistrate of Patna, Mr Raj Kumar Singh, and got the necessary permission to exhume the body.

But before they went to the cemetery, Mr Kunal and Mr Singh went to Mr Manohar Das, the priest who had buried Swetnisha, to seek his permission to exhume the body. (Later Mr. Das produced another death certificate, issued by Dr A.K. Thakur, a

well-known physician of Patna and the deputy director of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Cardiology. The certificate was issued at 4.30 am on 8 May and the cause of death was given as "cardiac arrest.")

Deciding to look into the matter the next morning, the SSP and the DM entered the cemetery at Pirmohani, accompanied by a posse of policemen at around 10 pm (Miss Das is a Christian and therefore her adopted daughter was buried), the grave was dug open and the body of Swetnisha Trivedi exhumed. The body was then rushed to the Patna Medical College Hospital (PMCH) where Dr U.P. Verma, professor and head of the department of forensic medicine, conducted the postmortem. By 2.20 am on 11 May, the post-mortem was completed and within hours the body was taken back to the cemetery and buried again. Some hours later, at 12.30 pm, Dr Varma had the post-mortem report ready: no external injuries had been found on the body and there were no signs of internal haemorrhage. The next step, therefore, was to send the viscera for examination to the forensic laboratory. In order to expedite matters the IG(CID) was contacted and on 17 May the viscera report was handed over to SSP Kunal

The report confirmed his suspicion: Swetnisha Trivedi had died due to malathion poisoning. (Malathion is found in pesticides). Immediately, an FIR was lodged at the Secretariat police station and a case of murder registered against unknown persons under sections 302 (murder), 328 (poisoning) and 201 (destruction of evidence) of the IPC. Once the viscera report had been obtained, the police armed with a search warrant, went to Miss Das'



Prakash Jaiswal:|unaware?

house at 11 Strand Road and conducted a search. With the exception of a few sarees and an empty purse, nothing else belonging to Swetnisha was found. There was no evidence to suggest that she had committed suicide: no bottle containing malathion was found nor was there

any suicide note.

"Our first task was to find out whether it was suicide or murder," said Mr Kunal. "From whatever evidence we have gathered, it is more likely a case of murder rather than suicide." First, according to the police, an urbane, sophisticated woman like Swetnisha Trivedi was unlikely to take malathion in order to kill herself (malathion has a strong, offensive odour and leads to vomiting soon after consumption; besides, it leads to a very painful and violent death). Besides, if it had been a case of suicide, some evidence, like a bottle of poison or a suicide note would have been found either by the police or by Miss Das (Miss Das told the police that she thought it was a natural death and that she had not found anything near her bed or in the house to suggest that it was a case of suicide). Again, the people who had met her a day before her death say that she did not appear to be pensive and in fact, they say, she seemed her normal jovial self. Finally, if she had taken poison herself, why had no doctor been called till four am (Dr K.K. Jha reached 11 Strand Road at around 4 am) when she had died even though both Miss Das and her servants have stated that Swetnisha seemed to be in agony from about midnight to about 4 pm when she died. Had no one in the household found it necessary to call a doctor when Swetnisha was screaming with pain? Miss Das has

said that Swetnisha often suffered from headaches and thought that this could be one of those things and therefore did not pay much attention to it. The police, however, are not convinced by this explanation. Was Miss Das hiding something? And more intriguing, why had two death certificates been obtained?

66 Dlease leave me alone, I have nothing to say," Miss Rajeshwari Das told this correspondent, hiding her face behind a newspaper. "Why do you think I am involved in all this? I am a respectable lady." Seventy-year-old Rajeshwari Saroj Das, indeed has an impressive past. Miss Das joined the Congress in 1936, at a time when the struggle for independence was at its peak. She has been elected to the Bihar Assembly twice from Palamau district: in 1952 from Utari constituency and in 1957 from Garhwa constituency. Besides, she has been elected thrice to the Legislative Council (in 1962, 1968 and 1974) on a Congress ticket. In 1976, she became the deputy chairman of the Legislative Council and is now an MLC.

According to Miss Das she adopted Swetnisha as a child in Daltongunj. Swetnisha, she said, was the daughter of one Mr Jaswant Trivedi of Radma village in Daltongunj and was born on 2 November 1959. Miss Das used to frequently visit the Trivedis as Mrs Trivedi was her friend. It was on one of her visits to their house that Miss Das, who has remained a spinster, decided to adopt Swetnisha. Since then, Swetnisha has lived with Miss Das.

Swetnisha, from her childhood, was not very interested in her studies and it is not surprising, therefore, that her formal education ended at matric. In 1974, the year she passed her matric examination, she also got married to a mini-bus operator in Bokaro, Prakash Jaiswal. It was a love marriage and, according to Mr Jaiswal, his parents did have some objections to the marriage. However, Prakash Jaiswal, soon af-ter his marriage, left Bokaro and came to live with his parents in Patna (Jaiswal's father runs a sports goods business in the city). Swetnisha too shifted with her husband to the small house where her in-laws lived. Used to living in comfort with her foster mother, Swetnisha found it increasingly difficult to live in a cramped atmosphere with her four



ASSAM MASSACRE: THE INSIDE STORY An EXCLUSIVE report By ARUN SHOURIE



SSP Kunal: brave effort

sisters-in-law and her parents-in-law. It was around this time that her initial differences with her husband began. She, however, stayed on with her husband all the while working in a travel agency in Patna. By 1979, Mrs Swetnisha Jaiswal (nee Trivedi) had become the mother of two children. It was also the time that she decided to move out of her in-laws' house and stay with her foster mother. She left her job with the travel agency and in September 1979, joined the Assembly secretariat as a telephone operator. That was the time when Karpoori Thakur's Janata government was in power and Tripurari Prasad Singh was the speaker. There were 15 applications for the five vacancies and significantly, among the applications rejected were those of two ladies who had 'formal training as telephone operators. None of those who were selected were qualified telephone operators. And Swetnisha Trivedi who was the least qualified, was placed on top of the list of selected candidates.

Given the background that she was the adopted daughter of a prominent politician in Bihar and that she worked in the Assembly, it is not surprising, therefore, that she should develop friendly relations with politicians. And this she did; not only was she friendly with politicians, she is known to have shared intimate relationships with a number of them, including some deputy ministers in the present government. Said a ruling party MLA, "We all knew her as a fun-loving person, and I personally know a number of VIPs used to regularly date her. She was fond of drinks and was a regular visitor to leading hotel in the city." But alcohol was not the only thing that Swetnisha was fond of; often she used to take drugs. As one of her

friends in the Assembly said, "She used to often send the peon to the Assembly dispensary to get Mandrax tablets for her. We used to plead with her not to take drugs, but she never listened." In spite of her funloving ways, her friends in the Assembly testify to the fact that she was a frank and jovial person. Said Meena Rani, who had joined the Assembly secretariat along with Swetnisha, "She was never afraid of anyone. If she did not like anyone she used to make it abundantly clear. Besides, she was always laughing and joking; no one could feel that she was unhappy."

Yet, at four am on 8 May, when Dr K.K. Jha entered 11 Strand Road, he found Swetnisha lying on a cot in the ground floor of the house, her face distorted in pain. Even without feeling her pulse, he knew she was dead. There were no signs of vomiting anywhere around the cot and, according to him, Miss Das told him that ever since she had a rickshaw accident some time back she had been complaining of pain. She had, therefore, not taken much notice when Swetnisha had started screaming in pain at around one am on 8 May. After examining Swetnisha clinically the doctor concluded that she had died due to internal haemorrhage and accordingly issued a death certificate. Here the mystery thickens. If Dr K.K. Jha had issued a death certificate at four am why then was another certificate obtained at 4.30 am from Dr A.K. Thakur? Miss Das has not till the time of writing, provided a satisfactory reply to this.

This is not all. According to the police, who have been verifying Miss Das' statements, a number of other things that Miss Das had told them do not make sense. For instance, after Miss Das told the police that Swetnisha was the daughter of Jaswant Trivedi of Daltongunj, it was discovered that no person by that name lived in Daltongunj at around the time when Swetnisha was adopted. When the police informed Miss Das about this, she narrated another story on 19 May. She told the police that Swetnisha was in fact the daughter of Phool Devi, whom she had known but failed to provide any other details of this mysterious friend. Why was Miss Das not sure about the identity of Swetnisha

Trivedi's parents? Again, Miss Das had told the police that Swetnisha had not stepped out of 11 Strand Road on 7 May. But a later discovery proved that his was not true. On 19 May, the police discovered that Swetnisha Trivedi, accompanied by a person who identified himself as an MLA and an elderly lady, had in fact been admitted to the emergency ward of the Patna Medical College Hospital for taking an overdose of Mandrax tablets. According to Asha Devi, a nurse who was on duty that day, Swetnisha had come in a white Ambassador car

and was admitted at 4.15 pm. "She seemed normal to me and insisted that she had not taken any drugs. But the other two people said that she had taken four Mandrax tablets. Anyway, we had a routine stomach wash. Then something strange happened. Shortly after the stomach wash the lights in the hospital went off. At around 6 pm when the lights came on we found that the three of them had disappeared." Why? Was the entire episode preplanned in order to prove that Swetnisha had suicidal tendencies?

Assuming that it was a case of murder, as the police tend to think, then who could have committed it and why? It is believed that Swetnisha had in her possession a number of photographs of many important politicians in compromising positions with her. Was Swetnisha blackmailing anyone or was someone simply apprehensive that she was likely to do so? Besides, she had amorous relations with a number of people. Is it possible that a jealous or a jilted lover, unable to bear this, decided to kill her? Then, why is Miss Das being reticent in providing the police with information? Again, is pressure being applied to stall further investigation of the case, which could, in any case, bring to light the various romantic involvements of Swetnisha with some VIPs



Dr K.K. Jha: misled?

in the state? Though SSP Kunal says that he has reasonable evidence to make arrests, he has been stopped from doing so by his superiors, who claim that the evidence is "insufficient." However, an early arrest could prove beneficial to the investigation.

Swetnisha's body being exhumed at the Pirmohani cemetery: the beginning



A.K. Thakur: "cardiac arrest"

Meanwhile, some ruling party politicians are apprehensive about the scandals which the investigations could unearth, effectively putting an end to their political careers. As a deputy minister told this correspondent, "Just because some people have had close relations with Swetnisha, it does not mean that they have a hand in the murder. But if the police continue to dig into the pasts of these politicians who they think were close to her and then inform the press, then they will be finished." Then, he anxiously asked, "Is my hame on the list of people who are likely to be arrested?"

On 25 May, the mystery surrounding the death of Swetnisha Triveds cleared marginally when two policewitnesses, Nirbhay, an A. N. College student who used to live in the outhouse of Miss Das' bungalow and Trishul Kumar, a telephone operator in the Post and Telegraph department, reportedly claimed before the Chief Judicial Magistrate of Patna High Court that Mr Raghubar Jha, a Youth Congress(I) leader and the son of the Speaker of the Bihar Assembly, Mr Radhanandan Jha, was allegedly involved in the murder of Swetnisha. The other people who were close to Swetnisha, according to the witnesses, were the state minister for jails, Prem Narain Garhand deputy minister Karuneshwar. These witnesses reportedly stated that Mr Dudh Nath Paswan, the chief whip of the Congress(I) legislative party had played a role in taking Swetnisha to PMCH on 7 May where her stomach was washed. The witnesses spoke to the CJM of Patna High Court in camera. Though no arrests have been made so far, the police net seems to be closing in slowly and it is perhaps a matter of time before the culprits are apprehended.

Malur riots: The RSS, again

In February it was Bijapur and Bellary. In May it was Malur. In just about 150 days since the first Janata government came to power, Karnataka has witnessed three major riots. ANITA PRATAP, while tracking the events leading to the Malur riots, detects a common thread running through all of them: it is the RSS, working to destabilise the Janata government.

he tension between the Hindus and Muslims of Malur that was simmering, surfaced on the night of 11 May. A violent mob led by the RSS militants attacked the Muslims, ransacking their houses and damaging public property. Two days later, the police had to open fire on a 1000-strong mob when it attacked the police, leaving five dead and over 50 injured. The incident immediately donned a political colour as the crucial Kanakapura byelection was a few days away.

A Janata minister told this correspondent that the riots were sparked off by group rivalry between the present Congress(I) MLA of Malur, Mr A. Nagraj, and the ex-Congress(I) MLA, Mr P.N. Reddy. Soon after the riots erupted, an entourage of state and union ministers visited Malur to assuage the fears of the Muslims. While the Janata ministers left the scene soon after, Mr C.K. Jaffer Sharief, the union minister of state for railways, and the Congress(I) MLA, Mr Nagraj were present when

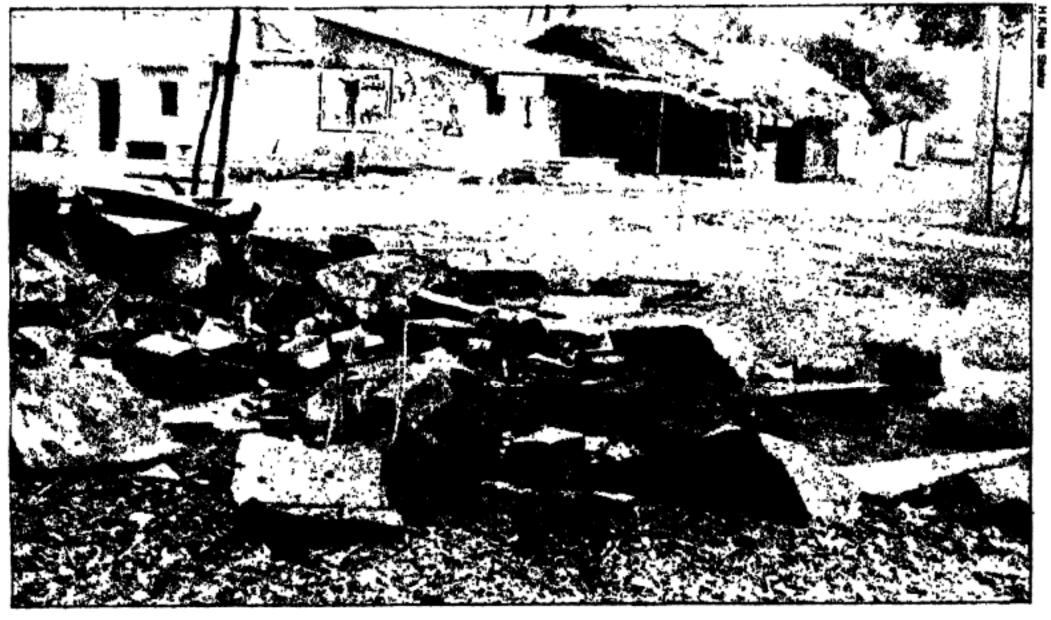
the firing took place at six pm on 13 May. In fact, the Congress(I) MLA left only the next day ostensibly on the advice of the police officers who felt that his presence would only aggravate the situation further. Though there is an effort to exaggerate the role of the Congress(I) in sparking trouble, the fact remains that the mob had turned violent and were in any case violating prohibitory orders under section 144, that had been clamped in Malur in the wake of the 11 May arson and looting.

While the incident has become shrouded in political complexities, a crucial fact appears to have got submerged. Mr S.N.M. Murthy, DIG, southern range, told this correspondent who visited Malur the morning after the firing that, had not the police resorted to firing, there would have been a communal clash that would have left several dead. He disclosed that the police had resorted to firing only when the mob armed with clubs and lathis tried to push their way into one of the lanes

that led to a Muslim locality. It is clear that the Malur incident is more communal than political in complexion. On scrutinising the episode in its entirety, one is forced to strike the familar discordant chord—the diabolical role of the RSS.

About three months ago a harijan woman was raped by three Muslim youths. More than the criminal, it was the communal aspect of the issue that caused a furore in Malur. The Muslim leaders themselves were of the view that the culprits should not be allowed to go scot-free. The accused were arrested and are in the process of being charge-sheeted. Again on 6 May, there was an 'alleged molestation' of a Hindu girl by a Muslim boy. This particular incident has been cited as the 'official' subterfuge for unleasing communal fury against the Muslims by the Hindus. But the molestation charge has been grossly exaggerated by the Hindu militants to suit their own ends. The SP of Kolar, Mr M.K. Srivastava, told this correspondent that the couple concerned knew each

Shops damaged by rioters in Malur: debris of hate



other well since they were students of the same college. The boy, probably carried away by his ardour, caught hold of the girl's hand. The 'molestation' ended right there. The boy was arrested but released after an admonition as he and his father apologised and also because the girl's father was not keen on pressing

the charges.

But for the Hindu militants the incident provided the stick to beat the Muslims with. An RSS meeting was held near the Shankaranarayan Swamy temple of Malur on 11 May. (Of course, the RSS denies that it had convened the meeting, but the people who participated included notorious gang leaders and men with established RSS leanings.) While the elders at the meeting felt that a peaceful approach should be adopted to curb the libidinous and such other tendencies of the Muslim youth, the Hindu militants and youngsters present insisted on retaliation. The policemen who had been posted to cover the gathering reported to their superiors that the speeches delivered at the meeting were inflammatory and that they could instigate violence.

The local police were aware of the fact that communal trouble brewing in Malur could erupt on the night of 11 May. On hearing of the RSS meeting, Mr B. Mohammad Munir, municipal councillor and Mr Nazir Khan along with two other Muslim leaders had gone all the way to Kolar to warn the SP of impending trouble and sought protection. The SP made prompt arrangements and by six pm that very day, the DSP and the circle inspector along with a police force

arrived at Malur.

Trouble erupted almost immediately after the meeting ended. The youngsters organised themselves into seven or eight groups of 60 each and went on rampage. The incident exposed the inefficiency of the local police. The government admitted the failure of the local police to tackle the situation. As the rioting threatened to assume the dimensions of a carnage, Mr Munir rang up the SP and asked for additional reinforcements to quell the riot. The SP arrived within an hour and in the next ten minutes the situation was brought under control. But in the one-and-a-half hours of rioting, extensive damage was wrought to Muslim property. Mr G. Chandrasekhar, the tahsildar of Malur, told SUNDAY that the revenue department had estimated the loss at around Rs 4.62 lakhs.

The RSS infiltrated into Malur about four years ago. In the last two years, their activities had gained momentum. There has been a regular psychological warfare against the Muslims for the last seven months, making the Muslims feel increasingly insecure. The RSS has three shakhas in Malur taluk, one in Malur town, one in Kupur and one in Keser-



M. Nagaraj, the RSS leader of Malur: spreading poison

kere. Mr M. Nagaraj (35), owner of the Radhakrishna time factory, who has been a member of the RSS for the last 18 years, is the Malur taluk 'vvavastha pramukh' (planning chief) of the RSS. Drills, attended by about 100 persons are conducted every morning between four am and six am. Under Nagaraj's leadership the RSS in Malur has been growing in influence and following.

On the afternoon of 13 May, followers of Mr Nagaraj stormed into the police station and demanded the release of Narayan Reddy alias Muppal Reddy and Murugesh, who were among the 50 persons that the police had arrested in connection with the rioting. When the senior police officers refused to oblige them, they left with threats of 'dire consequences.' The mob began congregating outside the temple a few hours later. As minutes ticked by, the inflamed mob began to get out of control, culminating in the police firing.

Talking to SUNDAY Mr Munir delineated a series of small incidents that had been taking place in the recent past which filled the local Muslims with fear. The Hindu youngsters had been of late taunting the Muslims with macabre statements such as, "Why are you all infesting our homeland. Go away to Pakistan. If you don't we will butcher you and pack you off to Pakistan."

Mr Munir also recounted an episode that took place on the morning of 11 May that could have been the possible reason behind the communal violence. A Hindu barber, Anji, had gone to a Muslim butcher, Mohammad Tajuddin, to buy mutton. An altercation ensued over the presence of a bone in the mutton. The barber refused to take the meat

and left only to return with about eight goondas who abused the butcher soundly. Thundering that the Muslims were cheating the Hindus, the band left swearing to take revenge. The rioting took place the same

night.

Mr Nagaraj on his part charged that the Muslims had perpetrated atrocities against the Hindus. "For one-and-a-half years we have tolerated their black deeds. On 11 May some of the youngsters lost their patience." On being asked to specify the crimes committed by the Muslims, Mr Nagaraj referred to the rape and molestation incidents. When it was pointed out to him that in the rape case action had been taken against the accused and that charges of molestation had been dropped on the request of the girl's father, Nagaraj stubbornly maintained that "there are a lot of incidents that have made us angry." When exhorted once again to be specific, he cited the instance of the Muslims obtaining a stay order on a piece of land that allegedly belonged to the potters community. Nagaraj could come up with no other incident. One left him with the impression of a bigoted man who could not even rummage cogent excuses for stoking the embers that had culminated in the communal conflagration of 11 May. The police as well as the Muslim leaders identify him as one of the main provocators with Mr Munir going to the extent of alleging that Nagaraj had been heard inciting the mob on the fateful night to "get kerosene and set the lorries on fire."

Communal tension was markedly absent prior to the advent of the RSS in Malur. One particular incident illustrates this. About eight years ago, a Muslim had kept a Hindu woman as his concubine. This had generated a lot of controversy in the town, but at no time were there any unseemly incidents between the Hindus and the Muslims. Mr B.A. Narayanaswamy, state convenor of the backward classes wing of the Janata Party, told this correspondent at Malur that communal tension was the product of an unholy union of RSS activists and Mr Narayan Reddy, who in Mr Narayanaswamy's words represent "a third political force." (Other than the Janata and the Congress-I.) According to the people, Reddy, who is a municipal councillor, is a ringleader who has the dubious distinction of pitting one community against the other.

With regular patrolling and the requisitioning of six platoons of Armed Reserve Police, the situation in Malur has more or less been brought under control. But it is clear that this is a temporary cease-fire. Mr Munir quotes an alleged threat held out by a rabid Hindu militant to the Muslims of Malur: "How long do you think the police will be around? When they leave, we will finish you

all."

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They were to be hanged in another 14 hours. The hangman's noose was ready. The two hangmen, Kalu Ram and Fakira, had already arrived. One of them was a standby for the other. Kartar Singh, 67, and Ujagar Singh, 60, had only until dawn to themselves. In summer hanging takes place at 6 am and in winter, an hour later.

winter, an hour later.

At 3.30 pm on Saturday, 7 May, the superintendent of the Tihar jail, Mr Ramachandran, led us down the corridor dividing thereerile looking death rows on either side. We were in ward 16. On each side of the corridor were eight cells with their heavy black iron doors bolted. Barely 100 yards away were the gallows: it is a short walk for the condemned prisoners from their cells to death. For the doctor, the magistrate and the jail superintendent it was a routine job to see that the condemned prisoners were hanged to death. Superintendent Ramachandran had already witnessed 32 executions: he was among the three persons who saw Billa and Ranga alive for the fast time.

When we first saw Kartar Singh, he was clutching the bars of his cells, presumably expecting his family members to call on him for a final meeting. The sound of our footsteps had evidently alerted him. But when he found that we were not the people he was expecting, the bent down to pick up a book: the Sukhmani Sahib. A copy of the Ramayana was lying next to it. Spread on a white enamelled plate was some sand-like granular substance. It was prasad. "I will go on distributing this till I am hanged," he said rather wistfully.

Ramachandran introduced us to Kartar Singh as his friends. "They will ask you questions. You can talk to them freely... Aaram sey, shanti sey..." he said. Kartar Singh nodded and said: "Aachchaji (OK)." He had not slept since 30 April, the day the black warrant was signed after the President rejected his mercy petition. His bloodshot eyes had a vacant look. On his face he had a four-day stubble. The white khadi kurta and pajama he was wearing was crumpled and beginning to grey.

A: (Looking at the superintendent) Bus (well), it
all depends on you...because you are my mother,
father...(Ramachandran: These people are here to hear you). Lam happy
that you have come. But, my brain
has for the last four days has become
such, sahib, as if, it had already left
this world. But as long as I breathe, I
will have to have hope...

Q: Are you a religious person?
What is the book you are holding?
A: This is our gutte (holy book)

A: This is our gutka (holy book), the Sukhmani Sahib ki jo Gurbani.

Q: Where are you from?

A: Multan...We used to live in Bharatpur district. We are Sikhs, but have not kept our jhai (hair)...We used to keep long hair earlier but not now.

Q: Did you do paath (reading from holy books) before? Or is it after you

SPECIAL REPORT

We want

Dr N.S. Jain, a famous eye surgeon of Delhi, who was having an effort them to kill his wife Vidya. The hired killers, Kartar Singh and Ujage S was coming out of her Defence Colony residence. A Delhi court serenthe courts they pleaded for clemency to the President. The President MADHU JAIN went to Tihar jail to find out how the condemned prorthe news: the Supreme Court had stayed the extension of the news: the Supreme Court had stayed the extension of the news:

came to the jail that you started doing so?

A: No, we used to read earlier also. But after I came heredhyan ho gaya (got more absorbed). I used to read Ramayana a bit, but I really learnt to read it here. The karamcharis (jail officials) here keep giving us books. So slowly I begun to learn. After all,

Q: What was the last night like? A: Janaab, how can I tell you? Yeh dam nikla hi nahin. I am alive, that's all.

we have so much time to ourselves.

Q. Did you have good sleep? A: No. I get very little sleep since we came here (death row) on the second of this month.

Q: Why did you kill Mrs Jain?
A: Ab janaab aise baat to bhagwan jaaney (well, such a thing, only God would know). The persons who are really responsible, the doctor (Dr Jain), that woman (Mrs Sharma) and Kaushik...woh to apna aish kar rahey hain (they are having a good time)...But, we poor people...

Q: How did you feel when you learnt that Dr Jain and Mrs Sharma were only given life imprisonment and you, the death sentence?

A: At first all of us were sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment. Later, we two were given the death sentence. The others will be released shortly...But if the government takes our good behaviour in the jail into consideration we may also be released. If the karamcharis can get our death sentence commuted then we will be out before them.

Q: Have you met Dr Jain after your conviction?

A: Not since we were given death sentence. Before that, yes.

Q: And Mrs Sharma?

A: No. We have no taluk (nothing to do) with her.

Q: Can you sleep well in this cell?

A: How can I? When a man has death staring at him, how will sleep come?

Q: Do you dream?

A: Of course. Whenever I get a wink of sleep, a current like electricity passes through my body. That is when I say, tauba... Never again. If God permits, I will tell my children not to go anywhere near such a man.



Kartar Singh and Ujagar Singh: to the gallow

Q: What man?

A: The one who does bad things. The one who breaks law. I will tell my children to remain four steps away from such people.

Q: How much money did you take

to kill Mrs Jain?

A: Nothing. What money? Now that I am about to die, why would I not say so if I had taken even one kauri (a single paise).

Q: So, you still seem to insist that you did not hill Mrs Jain. What's the

truth?

A: They did it...The doctor and Chandresh and Kaushik...They did it and we poor people are being punished.

Q: Then how did you get involved

in the murder?

A: Na, na. We were with our Bhagirath (a co-accused). That is why we came to Delhi and got mixed up in the case.

to live?

fair with a married woman, Mrs Chandresh Sharma, had hired Singh, accomplished the task on 4 December 1973, as Mrs Jain enced them to death in 1976. Having failed to get a reprieve from t refused to pardon them. Hours before they were to be hanged oners felt. And while she was talking to the Singh brothers came executions for ten weeks. Her report:



nd back

Q: What were you doing before all this?

A: Zamindari. We had some land; we were cultivating.

Q: How many children do you have?

A: Two girls.

O: When did you meet them last? A: It has been a long time. My brother and one of my cousins came when I was ill and brought medicine. That too was ages ago.

Q: Have you taken any food?
A: No, there is some milk, there is

everything, but...

O: How about the prasad?
A: This has come from my house.
When I took out all my belongings today, I found it. So I thought that today I would go on distributing prasad to our mulazims, the karamcharis.

Q: Are you afraid of death?
A: Who is not afraid of death?

Even the mightiest of the mighty are afraid. I am a small fry. Yes, I am frightened.

(At this point an official walks in with a sheaf of papers sealed by red wax on them and announces: Now, Kartar Singh, an order has come...The Supreme Court has said that you will not be hanged now. Silence. It takes a few moments for this news to register on Kartar Singh. Then his eyes light up. His body relaxes. The tension on his face disappears. But his hands begin to tremble. Kartar Singh profusely thanks the officers who brought the news and all those around him. Then, turning to the jail superintendent, he says; Aap karamchari ho, aapkey khaandan aur bachchon ko bhi ham dhanyabad detey hain (you jail officers, I also thank all your family and children).]

Q: Will you take prasad now?

A: No. I will distribute this. My heart was saying that I would continue to give prasad until tomorrow. I know all the running around that the karamcharis have done for us.

Q: Did you ever meet Billa and

Ranga?

A: They were here when we came but they stayed away from us. We did not belong to their society or had their chalan (ways). We met, but never talked to each other.

Q: Do you think that the murder-

ers should be hanged?

A: Zaroor (of course). But, within six months or an year. Not after ten or fifteen years...

We, then, moved on to the next cell where Kartar Singh's brother Ujagar Singh was lodged. He was not fond of reading or praying: there was none of the books that we saw in Kartar Singh's cell. His look was more intense and direct. When superintendent Ramachandran asked him if he had heard of the order (meaning the order staying execution), Ujagar Singh went off at a tangent and said, "Yes, I heard of this, the day before....No, the day before that day we knew that we were brought here to be hanged."

Q : When did you come to know of the day you are going to be hanged?

A: Three days ago. I know that all those who had been hanged while we

were here, were allowed to meet their relatives on a Saturday for the last time— and on the following morning they were hanged. Billa, Ranga, Kharaiti—all of them.

Q: What are those rings for? (He had two on his fingers: one of them made of some cheap red stone, the other a copper ring with a blue stone

mounted at the centre.)

A: Somebody gave them to me. He said that the stones would bring luck. I have been wearing them for a month and a half, hoping some good will come of them.

Q: Do you think you can beat the

gallows?

A: God willing. We have been in jail so long, we should not be hanged now. Dr Jain and Mrs Sharma are really the persons responsible for the whole thing. The police are keeping us here thinking we had taken kiraya (money for killing). Aur woh kiraya bhi hamen nahin mila hain (and we did not even receive the money). Those two who were with us, Bhagirath and Kaushik, were the ones to take the kiraya. They were to give us Rs 2000. We only came with them, that was all.

Q: Did the murder take place in

front of you?

A: Well, we went to Mrs Jain's residence. But I do not know anything more. Later from witnesses we came to know that the murder did not take place where the police said it did. It took place inside the house in one of the rooms on the first floor. Some say, it took place elsewhere. The other man was rich. Nobody let our lawyer be heard. We are stupid men. We don't understand anything. It was our misfortune that we got involved in this.

Q: Why did you then come to

Delhi?

A: We only knew that we had to go with this man and see something.

Q: Then you went to the place where Mrs Jain was murdered.

A: Yes. After that we heard that a woman had been murdered. We did not kill.

Q: Were you in the taxi in which the killers escaped?

A: No.

Q: Did you meet Mrs Sharma?

A: I don't know how many times or where the man with us met her. But, we were taken around all over the place like mad dogs. The result: we are now suffering, our children are now paying for our indiscretion.

Q: How many children do you have?

A: Four girls and one boy. The eldest girl died and her two children also are now ours. We have, of course, lost our land.

Q: Did you ever tell Dr Jain that you have been wrongly implicated in

the murder?

A: Yes, many times. He told us to keep quiet. He promised to see to everything... kharcha warcha (expenses etc). He took care of our expenses during the trial. But he

'What will they hang, live corpses?

Mrs CHANDRESH SHARMA tells SUNDAY

Mrs Chandresh Sharma was not all that keen to talk to the press. Her disdain for journalists was evident when she was brought into the room of the assistant DIG of prisons. Her carefully plucked puckered eyebrows. In disapproval Nearly ten years in jail might have aged her but when she entered the room wearing a pink kurta over a pair of trousers it was clear that she could still launch quite a few ships. Mrs Sharma agreed to talk only when she was told about the Supreme Court order offering a temporary reprieve to Kartar Singh and Ujagar Singh.

Q: What do you think of the stay

A. The present methods are cruel. Sunil Batra killed a government employee and got only a life sentence. The mercy petition of

these men (Kartar Singh and Ujagar Singh) were not i granted. There is no proof that they committed the murder. The police always lie. Where are the chappals of Vidya Jain? Where are her spectacles and the knife which was used to kill her? There was another taxi driver. There was a third man who has these things or they are with with some companion gement was given Mrs Sharma: femme fatale

on the basis or doctored evidence. O: Did you know Kartar Singh and Ujagar Singh?

A: I don't know them. They are innocent. Ujagar Singh cried in court. All this delay and then the hanging. Six years in a phansi koti (death row). What will they hang, live corpses?

Q: Have you met them recently? A: Dr Jain met them, but not after they had been sentenced to death.

Q: Do you think that the rich people have a better chance of escaping the gallows? Kartar Singh and Ujagar Singh seem to think so.

A: It is not a question of money. Their lawyer was stupid. Another lawyer had told them not to appeal.

Q: Were you guilty?

A: All the publicity on us, on this

case. Not even President Kennedy's assassination would have got so much publicity as the Vidya Jain case. The news was on the BBC. It was in the New York Times, and all the papers.

Q: When did you last meet Dr Jain?

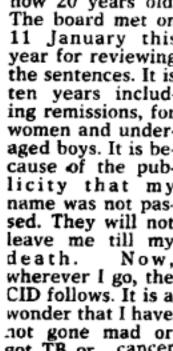
A: Over seven years ago, when I came back from Ludhiana jail. I could not even recognise him. Is this Dr Jain, I thought. Life here has become so abnormal that the brain becomes... the personality changes.

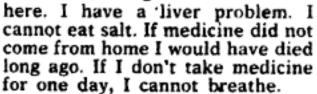
Q: Have you ever been out on parole?

A: No. Once foolishly I said that if I go out I would never come back.

Q: Do you have any children? A: Yes, a son. While I have been here, there have been seven or

> eight deaths in the family. My son is now 20 years old. The board met on 11 January this year for reviewing the sentences. It is ten years including remissions, for women and underaged boys. It is because of the publicity that my name was not passed. They will not leave me till my death. Now. wherever I go, the CID follows. It is a wonder that I have not gone mad or got TB or cancer





Q: Have you ever been in solitary. confinement here?

A: I am alone in my cell. I like it that way. And I can get whatever I want: books etc. But tell me, when will I know about the board's decision, one way or the other. There has to be some limit to all this. My son has trouble with his lungs. His father had the same trouble when he was 27 years old... This case has been going on for so many years. So many appeals. It costs money. I am not from a khandan (family) of killers. I don't have any criminal record. They have made such a hullabalo of this. All this publicity has killed us.





Dr N.S. Jam: a costly affan

would not let us speak. Nor would our lawyer. They made us mad, jaise ko nasha pila rakkha ho (as if we have been put under sedation)

Q: But, there must be some evidence against you or else how could you be convicted?

A: Badshaoh (my emperors), there was no proof against us. We were not involved in any of these things made out against us. I had never been to a jail before.

Q: How about your brother? A: Once or twice. Faujdari me jail gayey they (had been to jail on criminal charges).

(At this point superintendent Ramachandran interrupts "The Supreme Court has given a stay order saying that you will not be hanged.... Ujagar Singh does not appear surprised. He may have heard of this when his brother was being informed about this. "Bahut Dhanyabad (many thanks) Thanks on behalf of my children," he says, addressing no one in particular. Then he turns towards us and says: "You are God for us...We will always be grateful to you." To Ramachandran, he says: "Now that you have told me this, I will be able to breathe a little more freely, otherwise I did not know what I was saying. You see, I cannot eat anything. This is the fourth day I have not eaten. If I take any water or milk I vomit immediately."]

Q: Do you pray?

A: A little. I learnt to read here. Sunil Batra (another condemned prisoner), God bless him, has taught us some Hindi. I manage to put together some broken words to sing the couplets on Durga and Hanuman.

Q: Do you think you will have a sound sleep tonight?

A: Yes. You have given our lives back to us. Even if they do hang us tomorrow, we will at least sleep tonight.

Q: Do you want anything else? A: I would like to get my daughter married, I don't care whom she is married to, whether it is in a good family or a bad one. I cannot put my mind at rest unless she is married. My son can take care of himself.■

'A rich man is never hanged'

Supreme Court lawyer GOBINDA MUKHOTY tells SUNDAY

O: Now that the Supreme Court has stayed the executions of Kartar Singh and Ujagar Singh, is it possible that this might ultimately lead to the abolition of capital punishment?

A: Well, it is very difficult to say. Our laws clearly state that whoever commits murder shall be punished with death or imprisonment for life. A person sentenced to death or life imprisonment is, of course, entitled to know the reasons why he has been given the sentence: the judge has to state the reasons clearly. And there must be 'special reasons' for awarding a death sentence. The constitutional validity of the capital punishment was never in dispute. If there was any, it was set at rest in May 1980 when the Punjab High Court upheld the death sentence awarded to Bachchan. Our case is that hanging a person is a cruel and abnormal thing and so this must be done away with. We have been challenging capital punishment before the courts on this ground: we did it in the cases of Kartar Singh and Ujagar Singh. We did it while pleading for Sunil Batra. Of the five judges in the Supreme Court bench which heard the case only one, Justice Bhagwati, initially, did not endorse the death sentence awarded to Sunil Batra. Later, however, Justice Bhagwati agreed to go along with other judges but only in the 'rarest of rare cases'.

Q: What exactly is meant by the

'rarest of rare cases'?

A: There are no guidelines. They lead, howhere. The statement can be interpreted according to the philosophies and perceptions of the judges. "Gruesome murder, heinous crimes"...all these are adjectives, beautiful language. But what do they really mean? The Supreme Court has not clearly defined what it means. That's why all these confusion. The criminal trials do not take place at the Supreme Court; the sentences are passed by the sessions courts. In the absence of any guidelines the sentences are awarded according to the perceptions and philosophies of the judges. Then there is the aspect of publicity. Look at the Geeta and Sanjay Chopra murder case. The judges had no alternative but to hang them. Even before they had heard the accused persons, they had been tried by the press and declared guilty. I am not saying that I disagree with the judgement. What I want to emphasise is that

the judges are human beings; they are not gods.

Q: Can judges ever go wrong? A: Justice Bhagwati once pointed out the weaknesses of the judges in an extraordinary case. He cited a case in which three different sentences were awarded to three persons accused of the same crime. One of the convicts was hanged, the other was given life imprisonment, and for the third, the Supreme Court recommended the President to commute the death sentence awarded to him. In fact, Justice Bhagwati waited for two years to make his observation on 16 August, 1982. Jeeta Singh, Kashmira Singh and Harbans Singh were sentenced to death for killing four members of a family. Each of them separately filed petitions before the Supreme Court challenging the verdict given by the Allahabad High Court on 20 October 1975. The three-member Supreme Court bench comprising Justices Chandrachud, Krishna-Iyer and Untwalia decided on 17 April 1976, that the case did not merit any further consideration. Jeeta Singh was executed on 6 October, 1981. However, another bench comprising Justices Fazal Ali and Bhagwati decided to give a hearing to Kashmira Singh, and ultimately commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment. Meanwhile, Harbans Singh's petition was rejected by yet another bench comprising Justices Sarkaria and Singhal in October 1978. Another bench rejected the appeal as well, but because Harbans had filed a writ petition he was not executed on the same day Jeeta Singh was. While Justices Chandrachud and A. N. Sen were considering the merits of the writ petition the Registrar of the court pointed out that Kashmira Singh had in the same case been spared the death sentence. The bench then referred Harbans Singh's case to the President pleading mercy for him and it was granted. The case clearly shows the vagaries of our judicial system and demonstrates vividly—in stark and cruel reality-how a sentence is influenced by the composition of the bench. The accused may well ask the question: am I to live or die? This is a violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed in Articles 14 and 21. If Supreme Court judges can commit such injustice, I shudder to think what the district and sessions judges do. Mr A. N. Mulla, the chairman of the prison reforms

committee has said that one can find umpteen instances where the police concoct evidence and the judges are misled. Just imagine: in the case I was talking about the registrar of the court saved the life of Harbans Singh, not the court. Q: Why are you against capital

punishment?

A: Firstly, it is irrevocable. If a mistake is made, it can not be rectified. Secondly, what is the purpose of capital punishment? Initially it was a question of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but that does not apply now. Does it have a deterrent effect? The reports from the United Nations show that there is no deterrent effect. Mark Ansel in the Amnesty International report, says that the "deterrent effect of the death sentence is to say the least not demonstrated..."

Q: To return to the question of

hanging by rope.....

A: It is in reference to the inhuman aspect of the sentence. The Constitution gives us the right to live with dignity. I suppose if you have the right to live with dignity, you also have the right to die with dignity. In 1978, when Maneka Gandhi's passport was impounded, these provisions in the Constitution was invoked. The Article five of the UN international covenant on human rights, signed by India as well, says that no one shall be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment... Q: In this particular case of the Vidya Jain murder, the two condemned men who were to be hanged on 8 May told me that had they been rich, they would never have been given the death sentence. A: Well, take the case of the person who shot at President Reagan, or look at Patricia Hearst, daughter of the press tycoon. Both of them lightly got away. A rich man is never hanged... Look at those who commit mass murders by selling spurious drugs, and adulterated food—the leaders of industry—they are awarded Padma Bhushans. Justice Chinappa Reddy once said that the poor man who steals because he wants to make his life happy or wants to offer a present to his mistress gets punished—and, not those creating the conditions for his misery. The latter get away with everything. Crores of public money

are lost, but, the chairman of a

public sector undertaking is never

hanged. In the Soviet Union such

people are severely punished. Here

they get promotions.

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The rich countries do not care for the poor

he Third World is once again in for disappointment at the hands of the rich West. The Prime Minister in her capacity as the chairperson of the Non-Aligned Movement wrote to the heads of the seven richest countries, meeting at Williamsburg, Virginia, USA, asking them to consider an emergency programme to help the developing countries and a global monetary conference with universal participation. Except President Francois Mitterrand of France, all the others stayed clear of the issue, so much so that Mrs Indira Gandhi herself admitted that the response was "lukewarm." President Reagan acknowledged the receipt of the letter in a very cordial language but was silent on all the issues relating to the developing countries. The finance minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, went to Tokyo to personally lobby with the Japanese Prime Minister. According to a press release, "The Prime Minister of Japan indicated that he would, if a suitable opportunity presented itself, raise the question of the issue facing developing countries at Williamsburg."

Similarly at the ministerial conference of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) at Belgrade, from 6 to 30 June there is no hope of any breakthrough on the issues of interest to the developing countries. Even before the conference started, the USA served a notice of its indifference by not attending an informal meeting of selected important countries held at Tunis on 13 and 14 May to work out a consensus for the UNCTAD. Last year, the USA supported by Israel voted against the adoption of the agenda for the Belgrade meeting of the UNCTAD. Thus, this will be the third meeting of the UNCTAD—the earlier ones were at Santiago and Manila-which will end up without any concrete results. The rich Western world is too preoccupied with their own problems. Even after the decline in the crude price, the process of economic recovery, feeble as it is, has started only in the USA. In all other Western countries, unemployment continues to rise. These countries are so preoccupied with their own woes that they have no thoughts to spare for the developing countries. At Williamsburg, the USA was more interested in forcing other countries to stop



KEWAL VARMA

high technology exports to the USSR than problems of the Third World. The West now does not have the leaders of the calibre of Roosevelt. They now have conservative leaders with limited perceptive powers like Reagan, Mrs Thatcher and Nakasone, who cannot see beyond their noses.

Meanwhile the condition of nonoil exporting developing countries continues to deteriorate. They are being squeezed right and left. The main form of their exploitation is their terms of trade which declined further. The GATT report of 1982 noted: "As in the preceding year, prices of primary commodities (other than fuel) exported from developing countries declined more than the prices of commodities exported mainly by the developed countries, by 13.5 and eight per cent, respectively." The corresponding figures for food are 16 per cent and 10 per cent, agricultural raw materials 13.5 per cent and 6.5 per cent, and non-ferrous metals 14 per cent and 12 per cent. As against the big decline in export prices of the developing countries, dollar unit values of manufactured exports from the developed countries, on an average declined by about 3.5 per cent in 1982. These figures show that, relatively, the developing countries were the losers in 1982, as in the preceding

A revolutionary objective (for a new economic order) cannot be achieved by a passive programme of action (by the developing countries). The struggle for economic independence will have to be as bitter and militant as the struggle for political independence was.

years.

As a result of continuing deterioration in their terms of trade more and more developing countries are becoming bankrupt and falling under the clutches of the IMF. The IMF is forcing down the throat of debtor countries a programme of readjustment. But this is not relieving strains on the debtor countries. Commenting on these IMF-dictated programmes, the GATT has remarked: "If they are to lead to improvement in the general economic performance, the inevitable domestic policy reforms in the debtor countries must be complemented-rather, accommodated—by corresponding policy changes in the creditor countries. But the creditor countries are not responding." The GATT sceptically pointed out: "One can understand, even sympathise with, the politician or policy maker who says: 'Let's wait. We need a boom of some strength and duration, a decline in unemployment before we can start talking about making basic policy reforms.' In this case, however, what may seem practical politics is impracticable economics. It should be clear that simple muddling through has, at this juncture, only a very small chance of success because the economic situation keeps evolving and demanding important policy decisions."

The real crunch for the developing countries will come when they will have to start repayment of the IMF loans. (India will have to startrepayment of the five billion dollar loan by 1985.) Commenting on the bleak outlook, the GATT says that, "at current stages of development, after decades of being net importer of capital, the indebted countries would find it impossible to become net exporters of capital without exposing their political systems to an extreme strain." The developing countries are not preparing themselves for this D-day. If they continue to believe that the rich West will show favour and rescue them they are indulging in the worst form of self-deception. At the seventh Non-Aligned Summit, they adopted a revolutionary objective for a new international economic order. A revolutionary objective cannot be achieved by a passive programme of action. The struggle for economic independence will have to be as bitter and militant as the struggle for political independ-

ence was.

Will Mrs Thatcher's gamble pay off?

The safest bet is, of course, Mrs Margaret Thatcher. Her Conservative Party is most likely to win the elections in Britain. But Britain's maverick voters may still deceive the pollsters and politicians, and upset all calculations as they have done before, reports CHANDAN MITRA from London.

n another few days the British Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher would know if she had done the right thing by going to the electorate to seek a renewed mandate, a full one year ahead of schedule. The polling is due on 9 June. Her decision to go to the polls so early was promptly castigated by the opposition Labour Party. 'A cut and run election,' that is how the Labour leader Michael Foot described it. The metaphor was subsequently improved upon by others. Some described it as an attempt to run while the going was good and others called in a 'smash and grab election.'

The opposition had every reason to castigate the decision to go in for an early poll. Consistently, since the Falklands War boosted Mrs Thatcher's popularity and burst the bubble of the New Social Democratic Party (SDP) and their Liberal party allies, Mrs Thatcher has retained an enviable lead in the national opinion polls. It is believed that this steady lead coupled with the fact that inflation was down to a mere four per

cent—the lowest in 15 years—is what finally persuaded Mrs Thatcher to take the plunge. Michael Foot has said that Mrs Thatcher has been persuaded to go against her own intuitive judgement by her advisers in going in for an early election. Whether that is so or not, it does not appear so far that Mrs Thatcher has taken any unnecessary risk in doing so.

The opinion polls have continued to show a steady lead for the Tories. The closest the Labour Party came to catching up with this lead was during the third week of May when the Daily Star showed the Tories to be only seven per cent ahead. But a few days later, the same Star showed the Tories to be 18 per cent ahead of Labour. This does not mean that the Conservatives have been gaining steadily since the campaigning began. In fact, these figures probably reflect on the vagaries and unreliability of cross-country opinion polls.

The difference between Britain and say, India, when it comes to determining election results is that

Britain has had a stable two-party system as far as one can go back. Further, there are constituencies which are traditional strongholds of one party or another—a far cry say, from Uttar Pradesh where the 77 or 85 parliamentary seats have swung violently between the Janata and the Congress in the last two elections. Pollsters and psephologists in Britain are convinced that irrespective of the leads in opinion polls, the British election shall be won and lost on the basis of the 'marginal' seats, that is, seats which have a propensity to 'swing' from one party to another and where no party had a very big majority in the last general election in 1979.

The problem has been complicated further by changes in the geographical demarcation of the constituencies; these changes are the most sweeping since 1883 and have, almost universally, gone against the Labour Party. The Labour's strongholds are mostly in the urban areas and in the last decade or so, the more prosperous people have been shifting out of the inner-cities and mov-

Michael Foot: low rating



Mrs Thatcher: riding high



Roy Jenkins: non starter



ing into the suburbs. This means that the total number of urban seats where Labour used to command big majorities, have now been reduced, while the suburban and country seats, which traditionally favour the Tories have gone up in number. At the same time, because these changes have just come into effect. pollsters believe that many of these seats are marginal, and could actually go to either party. The Labour Party, naturally, believes in this hopeful analysis and has been trying hard to capture these seats. But the Labour's task is still stupendous. It needs, according to one of Britain's leading psephologists, Professor Iver Crewe, a nationwide swing of 5.2 per cent in order to come to power. Such a swing has never taken place since Clement Attlee displaced Winston Churchill in 1945.

The Labour Party begins with a further disadvantage. The personal rating of its leader, Michael Foot, has trailed way behind that of Mrs Thatcher. In fact, the youthful Liberal leader, David Steel, has a far higher personal rating than that of Mr Foot. In a country where the election campaign takes place more on television, images of leaders are very important. So far, Mrs Thatcher seems to have acquitted herself well in keeping with her popular image as a though woman. She has ruthlessly attacked Labour's policies. Castigating Labour's plans of nationalisation, for instance, she remarked to a wildly cheering audience, "Put your savings into socks and Labour will nationalise socks." This sort of hardhitting comment goes down well with the faithful, but could have the opposite effect on those who are not committed to vote for her. That is precisely what the Labour Party is hoping for.

The Labour Party, understandably, is stressing mostly on the Conservative government's record on unemployment. The latest unemployment figures show 3.2 million people out of work and the trend is rising. Further, an overwhelming majority feel that unemployment is the single most important issue in the elections. Understandably, therefore, the Labour Party has stressed heavily on its plans to reduce unemployment in its election manifesto. It promises to increase government borrowing by £11 billion in order to create two million jobs over the next five years. Predictably, the solution has come under severe attack from the Conservatives, who claim that such a policy shall inevitably lead to runaway inflation.

Another major issue in the present election relates to defence. The Labour Party is committed to abandoning Britain's independent nuclear deterrent and, within the life span of a Labour government, is committed to adopting a non-nuclear defence policy for Britain. The nuc-



lear issue, clearly, worries a very large number of British voters and this is one of the vote-catching aspects of Labour policy. But the Tories deride the policy as unrealistic and pro-Moscow. It is to be seen whether people, who may otherwise support nuclear disarmament shall vote Labour out of this consideration.

Britain's five million ethnic minorities have also become an election issue this time. In the past elections, the Labour Party had more or less assumed its vote as granted. But there are indications that this is changing. Many Asians—mainly the Indians and the Pakistanis—have prospered over the years in Britain and no longer identify themselves with the working class. They are more concerned with usual middleclass issues like tax-cuts, which the Tories offer, and the promise of cheaper mortgages-more likely under a Conservative government than under a Labour government. The fact that the Conservatives have put up three candidates of Asian origin, against Labour's five, reflects the seriousness of both parties in wooing the minority votes. The Conservatives have raised a storm by taking out an advertisement in their bid to attract the black voters. The ' advertisement which shows a neatlydressed black man has the Caption— Labour says he is black: the Tories say he is British. The advertisement has been attacked as insensitive and insulting and it has been pointed out that the ethnic minorities want to be both black and British.

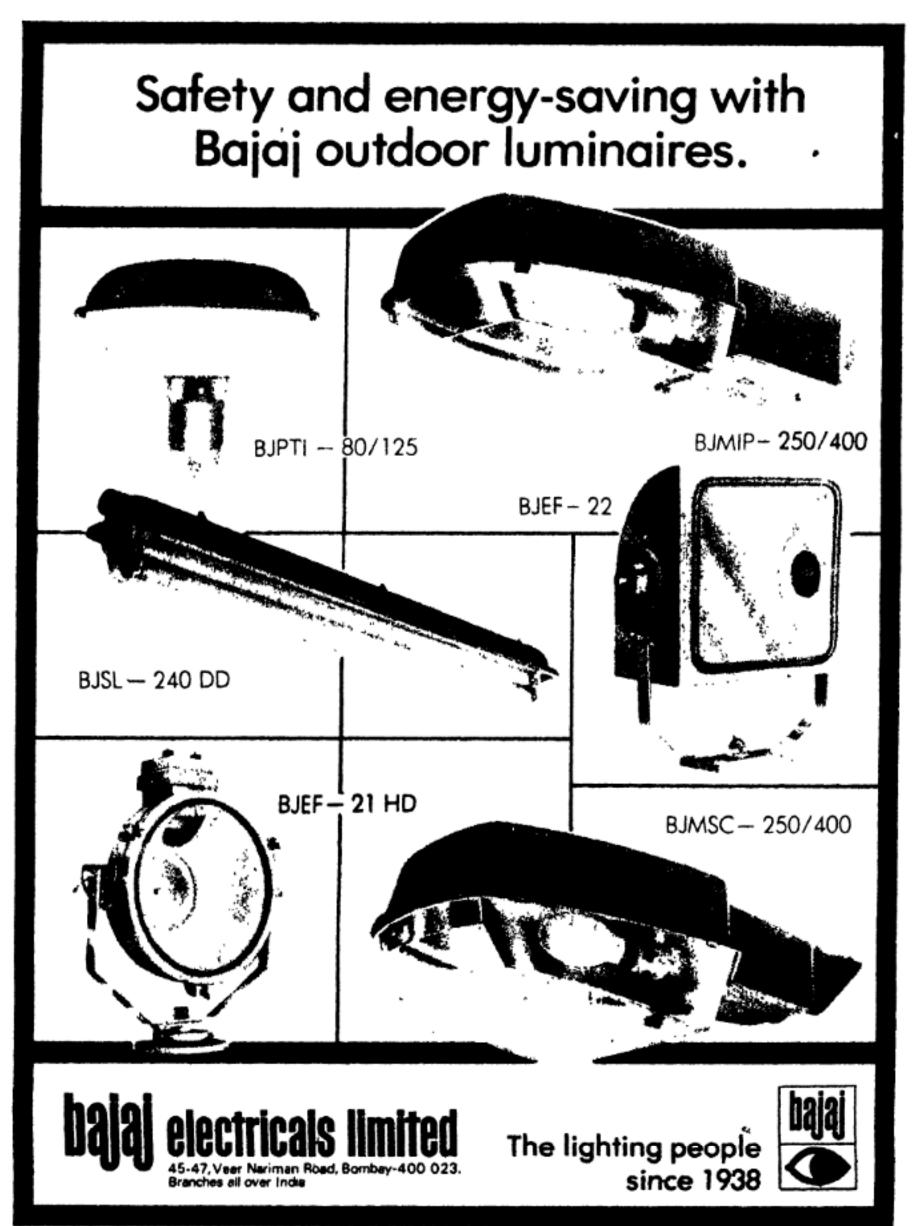
As the frenzy of the campaign picks up, so does the media's attention to the elections. The three major parties have ten minutes campaign-

ing time on television in turn every night. The Conservative Party and the Labour Party have been allotted five days each and the Liberal-SDP alliance have four. But despite trying very hard, the prospects of the alliance do not seem to be very bright. Opinion polls have shown & low third for the alliance, their support hovering around the 18 per cent mark. It is being predicted in some circles that the alliance could end up in the next Parliament with less than 13 seats, which is what the Liberals alone had in the last. The SDP had 31 seats in the last House of Commons. but these consisted mainly of MPs who defected from the Labour Party. It seems that the alliance's efforts to 'break the mould of British politics' has failed, at least this time.

The elctions are not without their comic relief. One person, who has titled himself as Lord Sutch and leads the official Monster Raving Loony Party has put up more than 90 candidates for the party. Lord Sutch who contests every byelection and unfailingly loses his deposit is hopeful of polling more votes than Enoch Powell's National Front which has put up 60 candidates and wants to forcibly repatriate all non-white immigrants.

On 9 June, the electorate shall prove or disprove what media men had been predicting since 9 May-it is all over bar the shouting and Mrs Thatcher shall be back for a second term. But as the campaign builds up so do the complexities and the Labour may be eventually proved right when it says that it has everything to play for. In 1970, opinion polls deceived Harold Wilson. Maybe they shall deceive Mrs

Thatcher this time.



Britain's biased press

MARY HOLLAND says that the reports appearing in the British press on Britain's election are mostly biased and in favour of Mrs Margaret Thatcher.

If ever there was a 'yesterday's man,' it is Mr Foot. All his imagery, his political evocations, even his economic arguments are drawn defiantly from a world not so much forgotten as not even capable of being remembered by the bulk of the British electorate. (Observer,

15 May, 1983) Labour's astonishing election manifesto is the biggest and most comprehensive assault on our liberties ever proposed by a major British political party. It is a Magna Carta for the snoop, the inspector, the informant and the form maniac. (Daily Mail, 17 May, 1983).

What do these two pieces of journalism have in common? You're right. They are both written by former editors of the New Statesman. All Labour needs now is for John Freeman to appear in a party political broadcast for the Conservatives.

To be fair, Anthony Howard's article in the Observer was written in the guise of deep concern for the Labour Party's prospects under Michael Foot. Paul Johnson, on the other hand, is now in residence at the Daily Mail as the party's scourge and appears to have access to as much space as he wants to vent his spleen on former friends and colleagues.

Sir David English knows very well what Paul Johnson learnt as a cradle catholic-one convert attacking as heresy a faith that he formerly held dear is worth ten believers saying the same thing. Thus Johnson's considerable polemical gifts have, in the space of less than a week, been directed against the Labour manifesto 'Mad Mike' Foot and Monsignor Bruce Kent of

Of the populars, the Daily Mail together with the Mail on Sunday have taken the most consistent pro-Tory line of the campaign. While other papers, whatever their political leanings, try to keep up some pretence of presenting all sides, the Mail has little truck with such notions of evenhanded reporting. The editorial line starts on the front page with headlines that are often simple smears. Thus in the Mail on Sunday 'Now the bully boys go out.' This 'exclusive' by the paper's industrial editor, Christopher Leake, told of alleged threats by CND activists against employees of Tarmac Ltd, the construction company

building concrete silos for cruise missiles at Greenham, unsubstantiated by a single quote from a named employee who claimed to

have been threatened.

Monday's Mail came out with the now notorious report under the heading: '35,000 jobs lost if Foot wins.' This yarn alleged that the Japanese Nissan Company would scrap plans to build a £500 million car plant in Britain if Labour was elected. Reporters Michael Kemp and Kevin Dowling quoted an anonymous 'leading official of Nissan in Europe' to back their story.

Nissan immediately denied the tale as 'utterly groundless.' That however did not prevent, the Mail coming out the next day with another headline, this time proclaiming 'Car job row boils over.' In this, while virtually admitting that it could not persuade Nissan to subsantiate its original story, the Mail wheeled on two British car chiefs, together with the industry secretary, Patrick Jenkin, to warn of 'catastrophic consequences' if Labour pulled out of the EEC.

Few of the other papers share the Daily Mail's eagerness for the fray. It may be that all creative enthusiasm has been expended on the opinion polls on which, according to Charles Wintour, Fleet Street will be spending a quarter of a million pounds before polling day, but a certain boredom is already evident. Mrs Thatcher's private life (Daily Mirror) is no competition on the feature pages for Joan Collins (Daily Star, Sunday Mirror, Sunday People), even if it does rather bitchily reveal that the Prime Minister's hair has been every bit as white as Michael Foot's since 1976 and is regularly dyed that tasteful shade of bronze. Is that sufficient reason for voting against her—or indeed

The Daily Express has come out 'foursquare' behind Mrs Thatcher and the Daily Mirror a good deal less than foursquare behind the Labour Party. The Mirror's distinctly half-hearted endorsement, in which it backed Labour and then proceeded to attack the party's policies on disarmament, incomes policy and Europe, made depressing reading, not least for Labour candidates who count on having at least one spread of Mirror rhetoric to stick up in front windows to rally the troops. So too did Woodrow Wyatt's attack on the party in the

Sunday Mirror, though he was at least offset by Roy Hattersley as a guest columnist, a role he now seems to be filling con brio for half of Fleet Street.

The other papers have not as yet felt the need to declare themselves foursquare behind anyone, perhaps because their readers already know where they stand. Thus The Times's editorial on the Labour Party's manifesto-'Xenophobic, illiberal, syndicalist and confiscatory. There is no new hope for Britain in this document. There is no hope'-cannot have come as a surprise. On both sides there is fear of a surge towards the alliance and determined efforts made to rubbish its chances in the Daily Star, Sunday Mirror and Sunday Express.

But if it has few friends among the 'populars,' the alliance has been treated with considerable warmth by the 'qualities.' The Sunday Times in an editorial entitled 'Enter the third force' not only reproached the other papers for failing to take the alliance sufficiently seriously but pronounced this judgment-'No deforming extremism disqualifies it. Its leaders are rational people with a long record of ministerial experience. The Financial Times also welcomed the alliance manifesto

The FT is one of several traditionally Conservative newspapers which seems to be surprisingly critical of the Prime Minister and worried about her pre-eminence in the campaign. Even the loyalist Daily Telegraph was moved to remind its readers: 'If Mrs Thatcher had pneumonia the Conservatives would still be able to fight a proper campaign.

Can it be that as the gap narrows ('7 per cent shock as Tory lead is cut in half'-Daily Mirror) Mrs Thatcher may not seem to be quite the 22 carat asset her admirers thought when they greeted the election with the slogan, 'The issue is Thatcher?' The problem with leaders who evoke passionate admiration is that they also evoke the kind of dislike which makes a lot of people go out and vote against them. If, as now seems possible, the election turns out to be a closer run thing than those early opinion polls predicted, the Tory press may well be advised to play down the Thatcher factor.

Courtesy: New Statesman



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Errant industrialists will be taken to task

he government of India, with a single stroke, has managed to bring the top industrialists of the country to their knees by enabling non-resident Indians to purchase shares in Indian companies. The share-buying spree by nonresident Indians has caused panic in Indian industrial circles. Hitherto most industrialists were complacent that they would not be removed by the shareholders even if they continued to behave in the most arbitrary manner. It is common knowledge that most of the top industrialists do not hold even ten per cent of the shares in the companies they own and control. It is also well-known that the government holds a major percentage of the shares through financial institutions. In spite of this the government never appeared inclined to disturb the staus quo.

By encouraging non-resident Indians to buy shares in Indian companies, the government has tactfully warned the industrialists that they cannot take the government's

support for granted.

Expatriate UK based businessman Swraj Paul has caused a flutter by buying up DCM and Escorts shares. Mr Paul, of course, is not going to take over six or seven Indian industrial houses since he has neither the necessary resources nor would the government of India allow him to do so. In my opinion, Mr Paul has been used as a tool by the government of India to strike terror in the hearts of the Indian industrial bosses. Mr Paul has only bought around five per cent of the shares in some of the industrial . houses and if his public statements are to be believed, he has no desire of unloading these shares. This can only indicate that his intention of taking over the companies remains.

The finance minister, however, has given an assurance that the financial institutions would not help anyone to take over the controls of a "well managed" company. The question then arises: Who will decide whether a company is well managed or not? The decision will not rest with any court of law or even with the industrialists. It will depend totally on the financial institutions, which ever it may be: the IDBI, the LIC, the GIC or the Unit Trust. Industrialists who formerly used to cultivate politicians for economic or other benefits for their companies will now have to use politicians to maintain their strang-



By BARUN SENGUPTA

lehold over the companies. According to many observers, this will cause a destabilisation in the industrial sectors of the company. At the same time they also feel that the government cannot venture to do this. If the powers that be have not been unduly worried about the destabilisation in the political setup or even in the bureaucratic setup in Delhi, why should they worry about a destabilisation in the industrial sphere? Instead, the central government will have tremendous clout over the industrialists who will now have to dance to every tune played by the centre.

Mr Swraj Paul has levelled charges against Indian industrialists saying that they are feudal in their way of running the companies. But who can expect industrialists to change when politics in the country is also run on feudal lines. And is it not a fact that Mr Paul's own Apeejay group of companies is also run on the same lines? But will Mr Paul's tirade force the industrialists to change their ways? I think they will not. And, in how many cases can the government of India encourage a change in the management of the companies? Not many. For political parties will continue to foster industrial houses for their funds. Moreover, the government will have to depend on the Tatas and the Birlas, among others, for the much-needed industrial expansion of the country,

Even so, 35 years of running public sector organisations has taught the government a lesson that private entrepreneurs are a must for the advancement of the country and it is my firm belief that adventurers like Swraj Paul will not be allowed to replace the existing tycoons. The government, however, has made it amply clear that the industrialists cannot run their concerns as they please. It is high time that the industrialists realised their responsibilities, for any disobedience will not be tolerated.

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Orissa dissidents get a reprieve

The AICC(I) either does not mean what it says, or more likely, without a nod from Mrs Gandhi or Rajiv Gandhi it cannot act. On 11 May one of the AICC(I) general secretaries, Chandulal Chandrakar, had announced in Delhi that three dissident leaders of Orissa had been asked to explain their conduct and if their explanations were not satisfactory, disciplinary action would be taken against them. But till now the dissident leaders who had been creating a lot of problems for the Orissa CM have not been asked to do so formally. On an earlier occasion too, a party MLA, Hemananda Biswal, who had embarrassed the CM by presenting the report of the public works undertaking on a fishy mustard oil deal in the Assembly was threatened with disciplinary action. But action is yet to be taken against him. Obviously, this has not been approved by Mrs Gandhi or Rajiv Gandhi.

Ramarao Adik's expensive tastes



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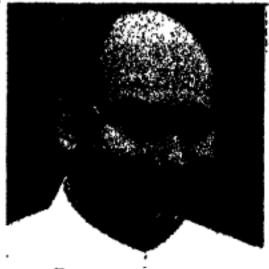
Ramarao Adik, Maharashtra's redoubtable deputy chief minister, not to be outdone by chief minister Vasantdada Patil ordered the construction of a 900metre long conference hall and a room to accommodate an IAS officer he has recruited as his secretary. The estimated cost is about Rs 8 lakhs. The minister of state for cooperation, Abhaysingh Bhon-

sale, was evicted from his room to find a place for the deputy CM's secretary. Two other persons displaced to make way for the conference hall are the secretaries of technical education and labour. All this after Mr Adik's chamber was renovated at a cost of Rs 200,000 in February.

Meghalaya: Congress(I)-led government may be toppled soon

The possibility of the ruling Congress(I) government in Meghalaya being toppled during forthcoming monsoon session of the Assembly now appears distinct. The Congress(I)-led Meghalaya Democratic Front (MDP) came to power in April with the support of seven defectors from the opposition Meghalaya United People's Party (MUPP), an alliance of the APHLC and HSPDP. Now the opposition MUPP is all set to pay the Congress(I) back in its own coin. They are hoping that. at least two ministers with their supporters will come over to the MUPP during the monsoon session and thus bring down the present government. Aware of the possibility, the Congress(I) too is preparing for the battle. For reinforcement it is pinning its hopes on G. G. Swell, a former deputy speaker of the Lok Sabha and currently India's Ambassador to Burma. He is the founder of the People's Demand Implementation Committee (PDIC), a regional party founded in 1973 and an advocate of the view that the PDIC should support the Congress(I).

Aga Khan follows Swraj Paul



Aga Khan: one more

Erom Rajkot, the burgeoning trading centre in Gujarat's northern region of Saurashtra, comes word the multimillionaire Aga Khan, by taking advantage of the concessions offered to non-residents, wants to invest in India. One company on which he is said to have set his eyes is Larsen and Toubro, an engineering firm (Swraj Paul too is said

to be gunning for the firm, founded by Danish engineers). There is evidence to indicate that a fair amount of Larsen and Toubro shares were recently bought by Aga Khan, the religious head of the Ismaili community. Rajkot does not have a stock exchange and the business in shares is transacted through the Bombay stock exchange. Enquiries at Bombay stock exchange reveal that payments for some substantial purchases in Larsen and Toubro shares have been made by the local Ismailia Co-operative Bank Limited, the patron saint of which, of course, is Aga Khan. It is not yet clear whether Aga Khan will keep these shares to himself or make a gift of them to his followers and take the benefit of the concessions on such gifts provided for in the non-resident investment scheme announced by the government. It really looks like India is going to be investors' paradise. If Aga Khan is here can others be far behind?

Mrs Gandhi may not contest from Medak



Mrs Gandhi: northward ho

Mrs Gandhi does not appear to be interested, any longer, in Medak, the constituency in Andhra Pradesh from where she was elected to the Lok Sabha in 1980. Since January this year Mrs Gandhi has been visiting her old constituency, Rae Bareili, about once a month. Compare this with her yearly trips to Medak since 1980. She must have concluded

that even after pumping a considerable amount of money into her southern constituency during last three years she cannot win the seat in the next election. She has been sufficiently warned by the results of the Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka in which her party's performance was dismal. And if she still had any hopes left, they were dashed when the Karnataka CM, Ramakrishna Hegde, convincingly demolished the Congress(I) Bangarappa combination at the Kanakapura byelection. But Rajiv Gandhi's friend Arun Nehru the current MP from Rai Bareili must be the one who is most disappointed.

PUNJAB AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY

A campus killing

Olympian Prithipal Singh is shot in cold blood

Ludhiana: Four bullet shots were suddenly heard by people at Thapar Hall, that houses the main administrative building of the Punjab Agriculture University here, on Friday 20 May, barely an hour after the offices had opened. Many of the people even claimed to have seen the assailant through the glasspanes. The vice-chancellor, Dr Sukhdev Singh himself said that he had a glimpse of a motorcycle and one of the assailants from his first floor office window.

When news of the tragedy spread, within seconds Dr Sukhdev Singh rushed downstairs and went straight to the spot-the parking lot-in front of the three-storeyed building, about 20 meters away. Many others who had heard the shots were also converging on the spot. A couple of metres from his motorcycle lay the former Olympian hockey joint captain, Prithipal Singh, the best penalty corner expert India has ever seen, his body riddled with bullets. The assailant had, allegedly, walked towards the home science college, got onto a motorcycle and slipped away.

But this was not just another killing as an outcome of the Akali trouble in Punjab. The villain in this piece, claiming the life of the 51year-old hockey star and director, student welfare, Punjab Agriculture University, was university politics. Vice-chancellor Sukhdev Singh told SUNDAY that the university had been in the grip of factional fights among two groups of students ever since the Moga police firing about a decade ago. Firing at the slightest provocation and drunken brawls were fairly common occurrences too. The death of a Punjab Student Union (PSU) leader, Prithipal Singh Randhawa in 1978 and the death of another actvist, Pyara Singh in April this year, had taken place in similar circumstances.

A few days before his murder, Prithipal Singh Randhawa, along with some others, had mercilessly beaten up a university wrestler, Beant Singh, over the issue of launching a strike. Then again, in a firing incident in front of the veterinary college on 12 March this year, a university boxer and weightlifter, Ashok Kaushik, was injured. Among those arrested for assault on Kaushik, was Pyara Singh who was later injured in another firing spree on 19 April. One Amritpal Singh of the rival faction too was injured in

the exchange of fire between the students of hostel number three and four. Ten days later Pyara Singh succumbed to his injuries and it was after this, that things started moving swiftly.

swiftly. The PSU members brought out posters and also sent a handwritten threat as a show of resentment against the Olympian who had intervened both in 1978 as well as in April, in his official capacity. The president of the Punjab Agriculture University, Mr J. S. Sandhu, said that the PSU had taken a vow over the body of Pyara Singh that they would not rest until Prithipal Singh was finished off. Soon after the Kaushik incident, the campus welfare committee under Prithipal Singh, had met to discuss the problem of indiscipline, and had suggested certain measures including the expulsion of certain students. These students included, among others, Pyara Singh, Pritapal Singh Patwinder and Manjinder Singh. Meanwhile, Prithipal Singh, took up the issue of discipline on the campus with the Chancellor of the university, Governor A. P. Sharma. The representatives of the teachers and other employees also pleaded for an enquiry. The vice-chancellor himself recommended an enquiry and subsequently, the Chancellor appointed the B. B. Mahajan Commission to examine the issues involved.

When B. B. Mahajan visited the



campus just four days before Prithipal Singh's murder, several students, teachers and parents of students met him and submitted their views. Before Mr Mahajan was scheduled to visit the campus, Prithipal Singh had written to the vice-chancellor seeking permission to meet the Chancellor as he wanted to bring to his notice a certain "case of corruption involving the university higher ups". The vice-chancellor, reportedly told him that since the Mahajan Commission was on the job, no useful purpose would be served by his meeting the Chancellor. It is said that Prithip. al Singh wrote back to the vicechancellor pointing out that corruption charges were not within the purview of the Commission, and he even asked the vice-chancellor to be present at his meeting with the Chancellor. Dr Sukhdev Singh agrees that Prithipal Singh had, indeed, sought permission to meet the Governor, but that he himself was not aware if the director, student welfare did have any foolproof evi-

Prithipal Singh had also sought permission to meet the Mahajan Commission, which was duly granted to him. Mr Harbhajan Singh Grewal, a campus coach who was close to the deceased said that Prithipal Singh had confided in him that he was to meet the Commission on 8 June and present the evidence that he had been collecting. Moreover, a former finance minister, Mr Balwant Singh, who was related to Prithipal Singh is convinced that the murder was evidently well-planned and meticulously executed and that the possibility of a deep-rooted conspiracy could not be ruled out.

Prithipal Singh, it is said, had remained a daredevil till the very end. He was the kind of person who would brook no nonsense from anybody no matter who that person was. He had differed with his hockey bosses if he thought they were wrong and he differed in the same manner with the university administration too. He was a thorough sportsman and would go to any extent to help a needy fellow-sportsman. In 1973. when he had been chargesheeted by the university authorities, he promptly returned his Padmashri and Arjun Award, saying, "My conduct is in doubt and I do not deserve these awards until I am cleared of these charges." Such was the stuff of which Prithipal Singh was made. Just three days before his gruesome murder, he had spurned the offer of police protection in view of the threats he had received. With his death, the oppressed on the sprawling campus have lost a genuine friend and saviour. The home science college girls, for instance, who attended Prithipal Singh's funeral on the evening of 20 May were heard

给前面的 建连续工作等的 化邻苯二烷 lamenting and wondering who would stand by them in a campus full of vice and violence emanating from all the drinking. (There are as many as five thekas—government liquor shops-within one km of India's pre-

mier agriculture university!)

The authorities have a tough task before them in solving this murder case. Above all else, the hostility between two groups-the vicechancellor and his deans on the one hand and Prithipal Singh, the teachers' association leadership and some pro-Prithipal teachers on the

医毛膜切除性 医皮肤 化氯磺基甲基磺胺酚磺胺 other-and the corresponding student groups, will have to be minutely examined. The correspondence between Prithipal Singh and Dr Sukhdev Singh will also have a vital bearing on the case. Senior SP, Mr D. R. Bhatti said that the police have worked out the case and arrests would be made any time. It is believed that there were two assailants involved in the crime. However, till the time of writing, the police had been unable to apprehend anyone.

Satish Kumar

GUJARAT BYELECTION

Success of the Congress(I) strategy

Ahmedabad: The Congress(I) won comfortably against Ratubhai Adani's Rashtriya Congress in the poll battle last month in Porbandar, the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi. The Congress(I) nominee, Bharat Odedra, romped home by a margin of more than 50,000 votes in a 14cornered fight that had become a prestige contest not merely for Ratubhai Adani but alsc for the chief minister, Madhavsinh Solanki.

The Congress(I) victory is significant for more reasons than one in Gujarat. It has proved once more, that the KHAM (kshatriya, harijan, adivasi and Muslim) theory of votecatching is still the best victory device for the ruling party. The Congress(I) had chosen Odedra, a littleknown worker and the son of late Maldevji Odedra (whose death caused the by poll), because he is a member of the populous mer community in Porbandar area with more than 90,000 votes. Considering that Bharat Odedra is a novice with no past political experience, his success is purely the success of the election strategy masterminded by Madhavsinh Solanki and his political mentor, Jinabhai Darji.

This was the first parliamentary byelection in Gujarat this time and a victory in this would certainly have raised the political stock of both the leaders vis a vis the dissidents, in the eyes of the Congress(I) high command. In fact, Ratubhai Adani had left the Congress(I) in December last

Solanki: reaping a good harvest





year, bitterly complaining against the KHAM theory. The dissidents within the party have also been campaigning against both the chief minister and Jinabhai Darji, saying that the KHAM theory had, by and large, alienated voters from the Congress(1).

One direct result of this victory could, therefore, be that when Madhavsinh Solanki reshuffles his cabinet, he will be able to cut to size dissidents like finance minister Sanat Mehta and civil supplies minister Manoharsinghji Jadeja. Another result will be that far from being ditched, Jinabhai Darji, who has been heading an influential committee on the implementation of the 20-point programme, may himself feel emboldened enough to claim the post of president of the Gujarat unit of Congress(I) when the organisational elections are held in July. Mahant Vijaydasji, presently the chief of the PCC is also the minister for agriculture and he does not seem keen to give up his ministership to become the head of the PCC in Gujarat. (It was his idea to field Odedra from Porbandar and he has extremely good political influence.)

The Porbandar Congress(I) victory has been a serious blow to Ratubhai Adam's Rashtriya Congress, which was fighting its first election since its formation. Moreover, Porbandar falls in Junagadh district, which is Adani's home ground. He had joined hands with the Janata Party, to jointly field Chandubhai Patel, an mdustrialist, for this crucial battle. Since there are nearly 1.5 lakh patels in the constituency, Chandubhai was expected to put up a tough fight, However, the expectations never materialised. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), resolutely refusing to forge an alliance with any other opposition party, fielded a Muslim candidate, Ibrahim Supediwala, who polled more than 49,000 votes---only marginally less than the votes polled by the Rashtriya Congress' Chandubhai Patel. The fourth serious contender in the fray was Dharamsinh Patel, the reneged Janata leader who had been adopted by the Rashtriya Santay Manch. He had been a member of the Lok Sabha from Porbandar in 1977 and had been defeated by Maldevji Odedra in 1980. This time, however, he polled about 10,000 votes and was among the 11 candidates who lost their deposits.

The going was certainly tough for the Congress(I) in Porbandar, since four of the seven Assembly seats in the constituency are held by the opposition. Still, the party forged ahead of the opposition to romp home eventually. There is no doubt that Madhavsinh Solanki and his group will reap a bumper harvest from this victory in the political infighting in Gujarat's Congress(I) in the days ahead.

Tushar Bhatt

Striking catches

Calcutta: By far the largest seizure at Calcutta airport in 1982 by custom officials, was about six maunds of gold worth over Rs 6 crores—the single biggest catch being 144 kg of gold valued at Rs 2.5 crores on 22 May. According to Mr J. Gopinath, assistant collector of customs, the single seizure of six maunds of gold in 1982 set a record in Asia.

Calcutta airport handles far less aircraft than it used to in the 1970s. The number of incoming and outgoing passengers has also come down as statistics indicate. But what has significantly increased is the nature and volume of smuggling of contraband goods, including gold. This has marked 1982 from the previous years. This is not to suggest that the scizure of contraband goods was lesser in the past, but that the number of smuggled operations has grown out of all proportions, and this, in spite of the reduced flights and lesser number of passengers.

Before making a study of a survey made from 1979 to 1982, a picture of monthwise seizures in 1982 may be interesting. On 8 February last year, contraband goods including one kg of gold valued at Rs 1.7 lakhs, were seized by the custom officials. As many as 37 gold coins weighing about one and a half kg together with other items valued at Rs 21 lakhs were seized on 21 March, 17 April saw the seizure of eight gold bars valued roughly at Rs 50,000. On 4 and 15 May, \$17,000 carried within the folds of a pair of chappals were detected, together with 118 gold bars weighing about nine kg and valued at Rs 17 lakhs. These 118 gold bars were hidden in the rectum of ten Calcutta-bound passengers. On 22 June, officials seized foreign currency and other contraband goods worth Rs 1.15 lakhs and on 3 July. 32 kg of gold valued at Rs 60 lakhs was recovered. On 13 November, electronic items worth a few lakhs of rupees

were recovered from the first secretary of the Bangladesh mission in Calcutta, on 22 November, synthetic fabrics etc. valued at Rs 1.6 crores and on 23 November, the seizure of goods by custom officials amounted to Rs five lakhs or so.

Foreign items like wrist-watches, electronic goods, gold bars and coins together with the foreign currency, continue to be the most popular items smuggled. Earlier, Calcutta airport seizures were not so striking. It is felt that over the years, the number of smuggling operations have gone up because Calcutta airport is surrounded by neighbouring countries where such activities thrive. A look at the survey of flights, passengers and seizures will be interesting (see chart)

Reputed international airports too, of course, are not free from smuggling operations but the volume is far less. Moreover, the central and state custom authorities have been grappling with the increasing smuggling activity in a praiseworthy manner. The customs seizures show an increased revenue earning for both the centre and the states.

The overall attitude to smuggling

SGPC censures Amrita Pritam

New Delhi: When, on 7 May, the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandak Committee (SGPC) sent a letter to the Punjabi poet and novelist, Amrita Pritam, accusing her of writing poems which offended Sikh religious sentiments, it came as a surprise to many people. The five poems that were singled out by the committee had not only been published 13 years ago, but contained few, if any, references to religion. The poems were published in her book. Kagaz te Canvas, published in 1969, which won the prestigious 1981 Bharatiya Jnanpith Award for literature written during the period 1965 to 1974.

Ms Pritam, 64, who was awarded the Sahitya Akademi prize in 1956 and the Padma Shri in 1969, felt that the whole issue had been instigated by a group of Jullunder-based writers and journalists associated with a Gurmukhi daily published from that city, who had exerted pressure on the SGPC to take this step. According to Ms Pritam, this group resented her success and wide recognition as a poet and writer. They had been waging a campaign against her ever since she won the Jnanpith Award.

According to Mr Khushwant Singh, former editor of the Hindustan Times and a fellow novelist who had translated the poems into English, the SGPC's notice essentially expressed "disapproval of Amrita Pritam as a person rather than as a poet." Ms Pritam's unconventional lifestyle has long been a source of annoyance to orthodox sections of Punjabi society. Mr Khushwant Singh said that Ms Pritam had gone to the Prime Minister on receiving the notice and the PM

had suggested that she approach Mr Khushwant Singh to handle her defence.

Interestingly, both Mr Khushwant Singh and Ms Pritam vehemently felt that the SGPC's notice was not a form of religious censorship, and was not the first indication of an attempt to enforce certain literary guidelines on morality. They insisted that the essential reason was professional rivalry. Mr Khushwant Singh did say, however, that the very fact that the situation had arisen was "another symptom of the rising fundamentalism and intolerance in this country to which the Sikhs are no exception." Ranjana Sen Gupta met Ms Amrita Pritam in Delhi to ask about the SGPC's notice. Excerpts from the interview:

Q: Why has the SGPC issued a notice to you for writing poems allegedly offensive to Sikh religious sentiments?

A: These poems were published long ago. It is only because the Jnan-pith Award has created a lot of jealousy and resentment among a group of Punjabi writers and journalists, and it is they who have pressurised the SGPC into issuing this notice.

Q: Who does this group consist of?
A: They are associated with a Gurmukhi daily published from Jullunder. I don't want to mention their names; they have links with certain Akali leaders and hence have been able to influence the SGPC. This group has attacked me under the cover of religion since they can't say anything against my poetry. It is just professional jealousy.

Q: When did you first hear of this?

A: I received a letter on 7 May signed by the legal adviser of the SGPC. The letter said that my "attitude was not respectful to Sikhism" and that I have "intentionally disgraced them." The letter said that they would file a criminal case

Q: What was your reply?

A: Mr Khushwant Singh has replied on my behalf. He wrote to the SGPC on 9 May that he had translated the poems, and had reread them. He said the poems "highlight the personality of Guru Nanak and are written out of love and devotion." In a second letter, he suggested that the poems be assessed by a panel of Punjabi writers and intellectuals. The SGPC sent a reply saying they would consider his suggestions when they took the matter further.

Q: Do you see the SGPC's notice as a form of religious censorship?

A: They (the SGPC) are not trying to enforce any particular outlook. They have simply allowed themselves to be used. But the committee should not have allowed itself to be used in this manner. They should have had that integrity of mind. They were misguided I suppose.

Q: Why did they single out these

particular poems?

A: I don't know. There is nothing to offend Sikh religious orthodoxy in any of my poems. In fact, two of the poems they have objected to, are part of a long series. I think they were picked on only because of their titles, which are Singh and Kaur.

Q: What is your reaction to all this? A: I am true to myself and true to Guru Nanak. And that is a source of great satisfaction to me.

| Year | Tetal No. of Incoming & outgoing flights | Mp. of incoming passengers (in lakhs) | No. of outgoing passengers (in lakhs) | No. of soizures | Value of goods salzed (in lakhs) | Amount of duty realised (in lakks) | Amount of fine rea- tised (in takes) | Aindust of panalty realised | |
|--------------|---|--|--|--------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1979 | 3151 | 1.05 | 111 | 470 | Rs 86 50 | Rs.107 88 | Rs. 15.8 | Rs.22 98 | |
| 1980 1981 | 2651 2574 | 1 13 1 21 | 1.14 1 21 | 343 261 | Rs 48 21 Rs 113 55 | Rs.161 28 Rs 169 04 | Rs 12 39 Rs 2 23 | Rs 54 87 Rs 1.35 | |
| 1982 | 2420 | 1.19 | 1 19 | 305 | Rs 391 63 | Rs 201 11 | Rs 2.68 | Rs.1.67 | |

activity too has changed. For example, members of the royal family of Bhutan who had flown in from Hongkong last year went on record to have smuggled gold in nine brief cases valued at Rs 2.7 crores. They were detected in time by the custom officials while they were rushing along the green channel which is exclusively for the use of passengers carrying no dutiable goods. The three members of the Bhutan royal family are said to have been involved in two more smuggling cases in the past. But at the moment, the

case is at a standstill, awaiting instructions from Delhi. If such cases are hushed up under instructions from higher ups, one has every reason to doubt that the government is really keen on discouraging smuggling activity.

Yet, the custom department at Calcutta airport is quite vigilant, says Mr T. Swaminathan, collector of customs. There have been very few instances when smugglers have really got away, hoodwinking the custom checkers. But some measures will have to be taken to ensure that the

green channel will not be misused by the top people, otherwise smuggling operations will continue to flourish despite stricter vigilance by the officials of the customs department. Both Mr Swaminathan and Mr B.P. Varma, the additional collector of customs, said that the passengers do have a right to walk through the green channel and they hoped that passengers would maintain the dignity of the facilities offered to the public for quick movement.

Nihar Ghosh

MAHARASHTRA

The Tirpude factor

Bombay: The ongoing power struggle between chief minister Vasantdada Patil and his deputy, Mr Ramrao Adik, is likely to witness a new dimension with the entry of Mr Nasikrao Tirpude into the Congress(I). Mr Tirpude was the former deputy chief minister when Mr Vasantdada Patil (then in the Chavan Congress) was the chief minister in 1977. He was solely responsible at that time for keeping the Congress(I) flag flying in the state when in almost every other state it was humbled. Yet Mrs Indira Gandhi, true to her opportunistic style of functioning, threw him out of the party as soon as she had gathered enough strength of her own. Mr Tirpude, headstrong and outspoken by nature, clashed with Sanjay Gandhi and had, in a public meeting in Pune dubbed Mr Sharad Pawar as the "Sanjay Gandhi of Mr Y.B. Chavan." This had annoyed Sanjay Gandhi and with a vengeance he worked to oust Mr Tirpude and succeeded.

Now the situation in Maharashtra has changed once again. Vidarbha is sitting on a volcano of discontent, nurtured by economic neglect. The power balance has once again shifted in favour of western Maharashtra. For instance, late last month, the government had forgone rupees five crores by way of concessions to the sugar barons, who are primarily from western Maharashtra. But Vidarbha's demands for more spinning mills have fallen on deaf ears.

Mr Tiroude's first major public appearance barely a week after he was re-admitted to the Congress(I) was, significantly, in Nagpur the capital of Vidarbha. This in itself showed that Mr Tirpude reflects the twin fears of 1, Safdarjang Road,

namely, the possibility of a maratha confederation and the possibility, however remote, of Vidarbha falling into the hands of Sharad Pawar or Maneka Gandhi, both of whom have been holding massive meetings. Vidarbha has no leadership of its own which is capable of voicing the demands and aspirations of the region. Even in its moment of catastrophe when its orange crop has wilted under the scourge of drought and disease, when Baroud in Amravati district (known as the California of Vidarbha) has been turned into a

Tirpude: a spokesman for Vidarbha



desert, the state government has not woken to the needs of saving the orange groves. This calamity which has today befallen the orange groves was evident for the last three years, but no steps were taken. Had it been the sugarcane crop in danger, it would have been a different story, say the Vidarbhaites. But oranges, like jowar and cotton, are the step children of the Maharashtra government. And so Mr Nasikrao Tirpude's emotive speeches and organisational capacity are likely to make him the spokesman of Vidarbha. Mr Tirpude, like Mr Antulay, does not believe in "street politics." He believes in "table politics where everything is done by manoeuvring," said one Vidarbha politician. In his speech at a rousing reception accorded to him in Nagpur, Mr Tirpude said, "The six districts of western Maharashtra are the empire, and Vidarbha, Marathwada and the Konkan are its colonies." He literally called for an "overthrow of this domination if the unity of the state is to remain intact.'

Today it is the squabbling marathas who retain the reins of power, however illusory. The chief minister and the deputy chief minister are both from western Maharashtra. And so is Mr Babasaheb Bhosale who is trying to form a third force in the state. Mr Tirpude is trying for the leadership of the non-marathas who form 80 per cent of the legislators in the Vidarbha region. He is donning the mantle of ex-chief minister Antulay who was a rallying force for the minorities and the nonmarathas and who used his position to shift the balance of power from western Maharashtra and distribute it to Konkan, Vidarbha and Marathwada. With Mr Antulay's ouster in 1982, the position had reverted to the pre-Antulay days.

The point that Mr Tirpude's tough stand and speeches raises, is whether the Congress(I) high command would like to see the disintegration of the party. Mr Tirpude's position is bound to sharpen the confrontation between the marathas and non-marathas, which any battle for economic justice is going to result in.

The nature of Mr Tirpude's true role will be revealed soon in today's fast pace of political changes. For, if Mr Tirpude has been re-admitted into the party to be a trouble-shooter on behalf of the troubled deity in New Delhi, he will have a tough time. The people of Vidarbha have had their appetites whetted by the hopes held out to them and fulfilled to some extent by Mr Antulay. They are unlikely to be satisfied with Mr Tirpude's rhetoric, however emotive, about the hegemony of western Maharashtra. They will expect something more concrete, particularly because neither Mr Sharad Pawar nor Maneka Gandhi lack in rhetoric power.

Mr Tirpude, like all leaders, has

started out by saying that he does not want any position in state politics and that the triumvirate of Vasantdada, Adik and Aseer should not be worried about his re-entry. But his supporters have been unabashedly canvassing for him to take over as MPCC president, for which he has the "right" qualification. He has been a loyalist and has served Mrs Gandhi like few other politicians in Maharashtra have. Moreover, he belongs to the scheduled caste and a backward region. By nature and temperament, he cannot remain in the background. Although he is older and has suffered, first when he was at loggerheads with Sanjay Gandhi and then when he was in wilderness waiting impatiently to get into the Congress(I), he is capable of adding fuel to the fire of infighting and power struggle that is ravaging the party at the highest levels in Maharashtra.

Olga Tellis

JNU

Violence in the academy

New Delhi: When Jalees Ahmad, a post-graduate science student of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) was directed to shift from Jhelum hostel to Ganga hostel, no one foresaw that it would snowball into a bitter confrontation between the students and teachers, the entry of the police into the campus, the destruction of several thousand rupees worth of property the closure of the university sine die and the arrest of over 350 students, including 60 girls.

The present crisis began when the warden of Jhelum hostel, Dr M. Alam, directed Jalees Ahmad, a Phd student in the school of environmental sciences, to shift to the adjacent hostel, Ganga. Relations between the two had been strained. Matters came to a head when Ahmad abused Dr Alam's wife, and the warden ordered him to move out. Ahmad refused to shift and the students union took up the issue on the grounds that no action could be taken against Ahmad without an enquiry.

Sitting in the ruins of his drawing room, amidst broken furniture and smashed crockery, a still shaken Dr Alam insisted that an enquiry had, in fact, been held on 4 April Ahmad was eventually forced to move and a lock was placed on his Jhelum hostel room. On 27 April, however, a large group of students gheraoed Dr Alam's residence in Jhelum hostel, demanding the reinstatement of Ahmad in Jhelum, pending an enquiry.

The gherao of Dr Alam was lifted only seven days later, after the VC, Prof. P. N. Srivastava, refused to

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accede to the demands and a strong condemnation of the gherao was made by the JNU teachers association (JNUTA), when a group of students including the union president Mr N. R. Mohanty, the general secretary, Mr Sajal Mitra and others broke open the lock on Ahmad's An Associa-Jhelum hostel room. tion meeting passed a resolution condemning the incident and urging disciplinary action against the concerned students, failing which they would boycott the coming final semester examinations. Under pressure from the JNUTA, and in the absence of the VC, the administration issued a show cause notice to the union president, the general secretary and Jalees Ahmad, asking why they should not be penalised, leading to expulsion and giving a 48 hour deadline for their reply.

After this, events moved swiftly. On 7 May a general body meeting, attended by nearly 900 students (the total student strength is about 3,000) endorsed, in a rare show of unity the students council's decision to boycott exams and all academic work unless the notice was withdrawn. On 9 May the VC (who had returned) refused to budge and issued an expulsion notification against the three students. The same evening, an emergency meeting of the students decided to gherao the VC and nearly 1,000 students marched to the VC's residence on the new campus, where he had set up a camp office and was holding a meeting with the rector, Mr M. S. Agwami and the registrar, Mr R. S. Batra.

Negotiations were, however, con-

tinuing, and according to students, a. solution was emerging when in a surprise raid, a posse of the central reserve police force (CRPF) entered the campus, broke into the VC's house and rescued the three university officials. In the process, the 30 students in the house were beaten up and several injured. They were arrested and the police withdrew with them and the officials, who were later hospitalised. Subsequently, the students left on the campus went on a violent rampage, smashing the window panes of the teachers' houses and stoning cars belonging to faculty members. The violence is said to be the work of a few "extremist elements," and evidence does point to the fact that many students tried to restrain them. During the rampage, the university security staff was nowhere in sight and the terrified teachers were left at the mercy of the mob.

With nearly all their leadership in jail, the student's union was finding it difficult to chalk out a coherent strategy. The order, issued on 12 May, to vacate the hoste's within 48 hours was a further blow. A delegation to the Lt. Governor (LG) of Delhi, Mr Jagmohan, failed to get the eviction order quashed or get any guarantee on the release of students in jail. The LG said that since they had been remanded in judicial custody, it was a matter for the courts to decide.

The arrested students were lodged in Delhi's Tihar Jail but on 15 May four girls managed to escape by having the seal stamped on visitors' arms transferred onto theirs. The same expedient was used by 63 boys whose escape was detected two days later. Six members of the jail staff were subsequently suspended. Since all the escapees gave false names and addresses to the police, they have not yet been traced.

The students still in jail were subsequently released on bail. They face a total of 19 charges including attempt to murder and giving false names. No distinction has been made on the charges against those who were arrested gheraoing the VC and those who courted arrest later.

The VC, Prof. P.N. Srivastav, is determined to "spruce up" the university before reopening it. According to him, a group of "extremist" students was responsible for the trouble. The students union is divided and despite talks between the VC and the JNUSU president, N.R. Mohanty, the gulf between the students and teachers is still unbridged. Today, the campus is deserted. Only the police and few teachers in the staff quarters, remain. There is no indication as yet, of when the situation will return to normal.

Ranjana Sen Gupta

Paul's man in Escorts

Bombay: So far, the war has been mostly of words and confined to the drawing boards of the rival camps. But for the UK-based expatriate businessman, Swraj Paul, on one side and the Indian industrialists on the other, the hour of reckoning is at hand. When the Escorts shareholders meet for the company's annual general meeting in Delhi at 11 am on 9 June, the rival strategies will be known and draw them to a headlong clash. The Nandas who own and manage the company, have already made it known that they are not going to approve the transfer of some 463,000 shares bought by Swraj Paul in his bid to acquire the company. On 13 May, the day the company's books were closed, the Nandas appointed a subcommittee to screen all the applications received for the transfer of shares. The subcommittee includes, among others, a galaxy of former civil servants like S. Ranganathan, a former auditorgeneral of India, S. Bhoothalingam, a former secretary to finance ministry and K. B. Lala, a former commerce and defence secretary. Obviously, the Nandas do not want to give the impression that they had rejected the transfers out of spite for Swraj

Under the company laws the Nandas can delay the transfers till 12 July, but the contract that they have with the Delhi stock exchange makes it obligatory for them to signify their intentions regarding the transfers by 12 June. And here, Swraj Paul holds the whip. Under the terms of what is called in the stock market as the listing agreement (an agreement which the management of all the companies are required to execute with authorities of a stock exchange for listing their shares for trading in stock market), the Escorts board, like the board of directors of any other company listed in the stock exchange, can refuse to transfer only under three circumstances. One: when any statutory prohibition or any prohibitory order of a competent authority restrains the transfers. Two: when a court prohibits the transfers. Three: when under the terms of the articles of association of the company, the board, in exceptional circumstances, does not approve of the transfers.

By all indications, the Nandas will be taking shelter under the third choice to stall the shares bought by Swraj Paul (worth about Rs 3.5 crores). Even then, the company is required to take the president of the Delhi stock exchange into its confidence and tell him the reasons for rejecting the share transfers. And who is the president of the Delhi



Bhasin: in the buying business

stock exchange? He is one of two principal stockbrokers who have been buying shares for Swraj Paul ever since Mr Paul decided to have a swipe at India's two corporate giants—the DCM and the Escorts—early this year.

Harish Bhasin, 44, is serving his second successive term as president of the Delhi stock exchange. Besides

taking an active interest in underwriting new issues and shares, particularly with financial institutions, his firm, H. B. Financial Consultants Private Limited, also specialises in managing new equity issues, debentures and fixed deposit schemes. Apart from this Mr Bhasin is also on the board of directors of several public limited companies and investment companies. Obviously, he can be of great help to Swraj Paul when he presses his claims for the share, and pending the transfer, he can demand postponement of the annual general meeting. This will also test which way the financial institutions would tilt. The financial institutions hold about 54 per cent of the shares in Escorts and the Escorts meeting cannot be postponed unless the institutions throw their weight with Swraj Paul.

Since April, the Nandas had been taking steps to increase their own shareholding (which is one reason why the prices of Escorts shares continued to rise even after the finance minister announced a five per cent ceiling for non-residents' shareholding in a company) and reduce the clout of the financial institutions. Apart from offering liberal credit facilities to its suppliers and distributors buying Escorts shares from the market, the Nandas also offered non-resident Indians, a Rs 10 Escorts share at Rs 20 when the ruling market price was over Rs 70.

A Special Correspondent

'We'll get the transfer done'

New Delhi: H. C. Bhasin looks more like a senior executive of a company than the popular image of a stockbroker. But he is as reticent as any other stockbroker when it comes to talking about his business. When Ran*jana Sen Gupta* met him in his plush office dominated by the portraits of Tirupati, Lakshmi and Guru Nanak, the greying, safari-suit clad Mr Bhasin declined to give the details about the extent of money invested by Swraj Paul in Escorts and DCM shares or the number of shares involved. However, he volunteered the information that he had been acquainted with Mr Paul for several years and gave his views on the takeover bids by the nonresident Indians. Excerpts:

Q: How did you buy the shares on behalf of Mr Swraj Paul?

A: Through open purchases in the share market.

Q: Are you still buying the shares? A: (Buying shares) is my business. I am in the process of buying.

Q: Why was there first a sudden spurt in the price of shares in these companies and then a sudden decline?

A: The first was because of fear (on part of the managements) of nonresident investment, and the decline was because of the guidelines (on non-resident investment) which were expected from the government.

Q: What will your strategy be if the companies refuse to register the shares?

A: We will appeal to the company law board and have the transfer done.

Q: Have there been any precedents of companies refusing to register the transfer? What was the stand of the company law board?

A: Refusals of registrations have been upheld by the company law board on previous occasions only on grounds of technicalities. The company law board has to take a decision within 60 days of the appeal. The onus is on the companies to prove the reason for their refusal. Mala fide intentions are extremely difficult to establish. There was a precedent this year itself when the company law board ordered international investments to transfer the shares in our name. Another precedent is Bajaj Tempo.

Q: What would the implications for the stock exchange be if the company law board refuses to uphold your appeal?

A: Shares are negotiable instruments and have to be kept alive. A refusal would mean that shares will lose all value and (this) will have dire consequences in all stock markets in the country.

NEWS: INTERNATIONAL

CINEMA

A director is sacked

Calcutta: Polish authorities, it has been reported, have sacked the well-known film-maker, Andrej Wajda, from his post of director of the Warsaw Film Unit 'X'. The fact that no reasons have been given, has raised inevitable questions from concerned quarters all over the world. The foremost question is, of course, whether this action has been taken against the film-maker in an attempt to silence any criticism against the existing social and political unrest in the country.

The plight of the Latin-American film-makers is already well-known. Ben Barka and Med Hondo, the two non-conformist film-makers are in exile; Ilmaz Guney, the Turkish film-maker, escaped from the country's prison and took political asylum in France; Milos Foreman left Czechoslovakia and is presently making films in Hollywood; recently, three Polish film-makers started living abroad—Skolimowski in London, Zanussi somewhere in West Germany and Wajda in Berlin.

Perhaps the action taken against Wajda can be seen in the light of his recent film, Danton, which, just two months ago, was screened in the information section of the 1983 Berlin International Film Festival. The film depicts ideological conflicts between two leaders of the French revolution, but it is clear that Wajda has tried to portray a historical episode through contemporary events in Poland-Danton could well be modelled on Lech Walesa. Moreover, the film has comments like: "The enemy of the people is one, that is the government." The Polish government's argument, therefore, is that the film is anti-establishment and sides with Solidarity. Thus, although Danton has been released elsewhere (it was shown in France in January) it is still to be shown in Poland.

Political oppression of films or film-makers is nothing new. Even film-makers in India have, at some stage or the other, faced it. As a film-maker, Aparna Sen feels that an uprooted tree cannot be planted in some other soil and likewise a film-maker exiled from his motherland and forced to make films abroad can never be at his best. In her opinion, "Capitalist countries are much more liberal than any socialist country as film-makers there are almost independent."

Meanwhile, to the non-conformist Mrinal Sen, the progressive outlook of the capitalist governments is not at all genuine. He judges the sacking of Wajda from quite a different viewpoint. When he was abroad last year, the Onassis Foundation Award (with a very large amount of prize money, perhaps) was announced in favour of Wajda for his struggle against the repression against human rights. "I thought Wajda would refuse the prize, for this is how talent is purchased," said Mrinal Sen. To fight for Solidarity and to accept the Onassis Foundation Award are quite different things. But a few days ago while sitting in Oberhausen in West Germany I heard the news that Wajda had accepted the award. To me this was really shocking. One can express his political belief, one can even be critical about the policies of the ruling class, but one should not allow others to exploit such beliefs."

Swapan Kumar Ghosh

Emmanuelle star's battle for life

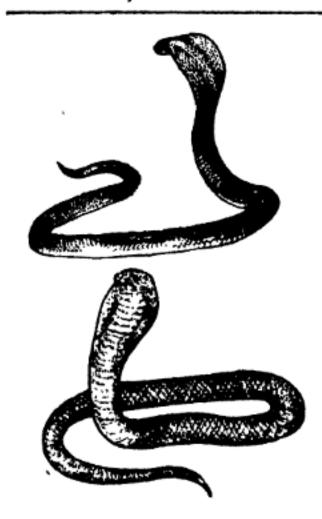


Former nude model and film-star, Julie Moxon, who created a sensation with her appearance in Emmanuelle in Soho, is battling for her life in a hospital at Slough (UK). The 28-year-old actress was dragged out of her blazing Mercedes which had veered off the motorway near Datchet on 5 May, and admitted in hospital with severe burn injuries. The accident occurred hours after she had won the runners-up-prize in a beauty contest and was driving back home. Inset, is what remains of the £20,000 Mercedes believed to have been a gift from an Arab suitor.

Science for children

Produced by Vikram A. Sarabhai Community Science Centre and VIKSAT Ahmedabad

Snake myths and facts



Myths about snakes abound in India and practically all of them can easily be demolished. One of the most popular myths is that snakes take revenge. This is far from truerevenge is perhaps an exclusively human emotion. Nor, as wives' tales would have us believe, do snakes drink milk—they only eat rats, frogs, birds, lizards and, rarely, eggs. Another widespread belief is that mantras can safeguard human beings from snake-bite. This is not true. Anti-venom injection is the only cure for snake-bite. But there is no need for panic if you are bitten by a snake: for, out of 200 kinds of snakes commonly found in India, only four are venomous-krait, cobra, Russell's viper, and saw-scale viper.

Steps which can be taken to prevent being bitten are to use a torch at night and not to go out of ones way to kill a snake.

Do you know?

There are certain low forms of vegetable life in the soil which can attack a living potato and make it rotten. Fortunately, however, the potato has its own inbuilt safeguards. One is its skin which keeps. out microbes and other organisms that would otherwise feed on it. The other is the potato's living cells which have the poser of protecting themselves from microbes and in-

Figure this out

Three men A, B and C have unequal amounts of money. A gives B as much as B has and C as much as C has. Then, B gives C and A as much as they each then have. Lastly, C

gives A and B as much as they each then have. If, now, all of them have equal amounts, what are the least amounts they had in the beginning? All transactions are in integral number of rupees.

Answer: A: 13, B: 7, C: 4. Substituting in a=7b-9c, we have a=13 b=o bas 7=d 🟞

0=2/--d≯ 10 Eliminating a, we have 16b-28c=0

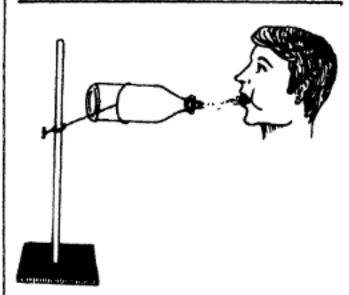
0=20+d7-s bas 1.e., 3a-5b-c=0

6a-10b-2c=0

| ⊃7+d—₽— | Za+6bZc | 49-4p-4c | 3rd transaction |
|--------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 240 | —9+3p—c | 2 3—25—2 5 | 2nd transaction |
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| э | q | В | Initial amounts |
| 2 | В | ¥ | |

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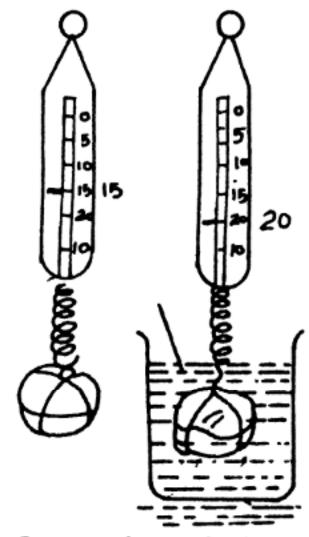
Bottle and cork feat



Want to play a trick on your friends? Fine. All you require is a wide-mouthed bottle and a cork of a size much smaller than the mouth of the bottle. Placing the bottle horizontally, cork its mouth. Now ask your friend to push the cork inside the bottle by blowing it in. The outcome? The cork jumps out of the bottle rather than into it!

This is a case of the Bernoulli principle at work. As you blow, you reduce the pressure in the vicinity of the neck of the bottle. The air inside the bottle now exerts more pressure at the neck of the bottle and throws the cork out of the bottle.

Spot what's wrong



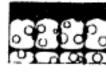
Can you make out what is wrong with this picture?



Colgate's trusted formula works to give you clean, fresh breath... strong, healthy teeth every time you brush.



between your teeth.



Colgate's unique active foam reaches deep to remove dangerous food particles and bacteria.



Result: Fresh-breath confidence, protection against decay, strong healthy teeth."

Remember to brush with Colgate Dental Cream after every meal: Stop bad breath... fight tooth decay.

You'll love its fresh minty taste!

GIHE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

Mithun Chakraborty and luck are having a glorious affair. The same man who was rejected by one producer after another, the same man who was stopped at studio gates and asked to go and see his face in the mirror even after he had won the national award for the best actor, is now having the last laugh. He is working with almost all the big banners and just doesn't have the time for even his favourite dogs and his wife, Yogeeta (formerly Bali). There was a time when actresses used to turn their pretty noses up or make snide remarks before rejecting any offer to work with that "tall black boy." Now the same girls are trying their best to be teamed with him

R ameshwari may not have made it very big on her own, but is still like a god mother and "one who inspires" all the strugglers. Her flat in Bandra, very close to a famous church, is like an open house. Walk in any time and you will see all kinds of struggling actors, actresses, writers, musicians and even technicians. They just sit around discussing plans for the future and Rameshwari encourages them with sweet talk and hot cups of tea. There is one thing about Rameshwari her friends admire—her guts. She has been living with her boy friend Deepak Seth who is also a struggling actor. She comes rom a very orthodox family in Andhra Pradesh.

The grand success of B. R. Chopra's Nikaah has boosted the sagging spirits of many, but the man who has benefited most is good old Deepak Parashar. A little before the B.R. film was released Deepak's career was at its lowest ebb. His contribution to the success of Nikaah is debatable but it has done him a world of good. In the wake of the release of Nikaah he has signed a number of new,



Mithun Chakraborty: the hot favourite

mainly small budget films. "These small films could draw the attention of the big ones and it is very essential to be around," he says.

Poonum Dhillon's day was made recently when she read an interview with Dilip Kumar in which he counted her among the better actresses of the new generation.

Reena Roy seems to have enough of all the games, glamour and controversies that have been so much a part of her life



Deepak Parashar: good days

for almost 15 years now. She is now seriously thinking about her future. Suddenly she seems to have become very serious, which has worried all her friends, fans and producers. Reena has stopped signing new films. Her plans are to complete whatever films she has on hand in another year or so and then settle down. There is talk about her having an affair with a millionaire from abroad. A rumour suddenly spread that she had married that man but it soon died down. The fact however, is that



Reena Roy: end of the road?

Reena has stopped signing films. "Don't you think it is time I settled down to a peaceful life? I have given some of the best years of my life to the industry. It is high time I did something for myself," Reena says and she is right.

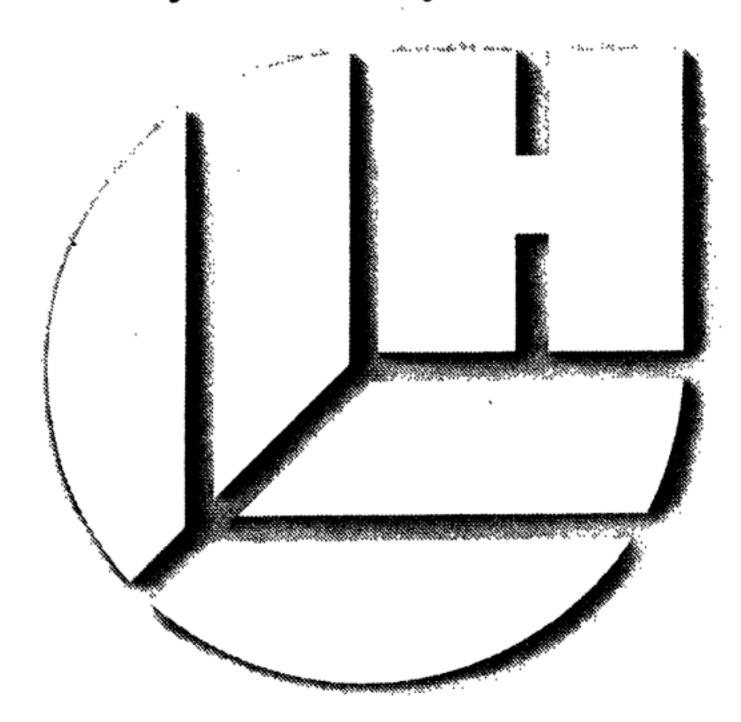
This is what happens when a fascinating actress's "business" is not well looked after. Padmini Kolhapure is busy looking for roles these days. The roles are not coming as they used to even though everyone knows she is one of the best actresses we have today. The reason is that there is a man who is behind all this. It is he who looks after her work and is busy irritating and ditching producers. And Padmini knows him very well but she can't do much about it. She is hopelessly helpless.

Everyone is making a lot for noise about the rivalry between Jayapradha and Sridevi. In Bombay not too many know of their differences but the gossip magazines are busy doing research and have already come out with some shocking truths. In the wake of all this talk comes the news that D. *Rama Naidu*, a leading Andhra producer, has signed both Jayapradha and Sridevi for his new film Thofa and Jeetendra (again!) is the hero. And very heroically, Jeetu says, "I don't know what the gossip magazines are talking about. I only know that the two girls are very good actresses. I am not interested in knowing about their personal lives. I only hope that their behaviour doesn't affect the film."

Rameshwari: counsellor



For 125 small-scale and ancillary units this symbol is the key to the world



Hindustan Lever wins the ASSOCHAM Award

Over the years, Hindustan Lever has been helping India's small-scale sector market its products abroad:a carpet manufacturer in Banaras to roll into the U.K. market;a shoemaker in Agra to enter renowned stores in Europe;a garment house in Bombay to attain recognition in competitive fashion markets in Paris, Rome and Geneva. In 1982, Hindustan Lever's exports of products manufactured by small-scale

and ancillary units touched Rs. 15 crores.

Hindustan Lever is proud of the ASSOCHAM Award— and for the recognition of its contribution in an area of national priority. But the Award really belongs to those 125 small industries who have risen to the challenge, stretched their resources, met tough quality standards and tougher competition...and shown in the face of impossible odds that India can do it.

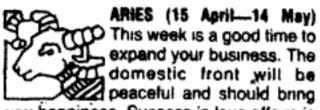


ASSOCHAM AWARD TROPHY 1982



Beginning 5 June

By AMRITLAL



you happiness. Success in love affairs is indicated. Look after your health; don't take it lightly if you are ill. Letters can bring you good news. Some good will come to you either through your elders or some unexpected quarters. Don't make impulsive decisions

Good Dates: 5, 7 and 9. Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 5. Favourable direction: North

TAURUS (15 May—14 June) This week augurs well for love affairs. You are likely to be financially secure Though frustration may

come through some personal failure, a friend may help you out. Be prepared for unreasonable demands from your elders This week important people could contribute to your success

Good dates: 7, 9 and 11 Lucky numbers: 2, 3 and 7 Favourable direction: South-East

GEMINI (15 June-14 July) This could be a good week of for you financially Students may secure foreign Scholarships. On the other

hand, there may be reason for anxiety and ill health. Those in government service are advised to be cautious in dealing with their superiors. The time is ripe for taking up a new venture, but not for resolving legal issues. This week may

be a busy one for you Good dates: 6, 8 and 10 Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: West.



gust) If you proceed warily on the professional front you could be lucky. Friends and relatives are

likely to help you out. This week is particularly favourable for artistic and literary achievements. But this is not a good week for courtship. Guard against deceit and be courageous

Good dates; 5, 8 and 11. Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 8, Favourable direction: North-East.

LEO (15 August---14 September) This may be a profitable week for you provided you take the help of your elders. Women will help

you out of a difficult situation. But your health or the health of a family member. may create problems this week. Use discretion in money matters. Your private life will progress beneficially. Young people and intellectuals will contribute to your success and well-being.

Good dates: 6, 7 and 9 Lucky numbers. 1, 2 and 4. Favourable direction: South-West.



VIRGO (15 September-14 October) If you encounter setbacks this week do not be disheartened; better days he ahead inspite of

all efforts, yourproblems will not be solved immediately, leading to perplexity and apprehension. You may also have domestic problems. A wrong decision on your part may create complications

Good dates:8, 10 and 11 Lucky numbers: 2, 7 and 8 Favourable direction: East



ZLIBRA (15 October--14 November) This week will be a trying one for you However, an exertion of will power should see you over

the hurdles. You may suffer on the financial front. This is not a good time for signing new contracts. You may be unlucky in love, and friends could let you down. Avoid travelling. Try to please your seniors and do not enter into unnecessary arguments.

Good dates: 5, 6 and 10. Lucky numbers: 4, 7 and 9 Favourable direction: North-West.



SCORPIO (15 November—14 Oecember) Be careful about your professional affairs this week. You would do well to consult your elders

and act according to their advice Deal tactfully with relatives. This is not an ideal time for changing your residence. You may be quite successful this week but do not take anything for granted.

Good dates: 6, 7 and 11. Lucky numbers: 2, 3 and 6. Favourable direction: South.

SAGITTARIUS (15 December-14 January) You should neither lend nor borrow money nor promise anyone anything. Be

guided by your intuition and a fair degree of good fortune is in store for you this week. Businessmen should be cautious in their dealings with customers Avoid speculation and extravagance. Excessive optimism could be detrimental to. you

Good dates: 5, 8 and 9. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: East



CAPRICORN (15 Jaquary--- 14 February) This week prospects are bleak on the financial front. Engineers have new job prospects.

Intellectual and creative people are also likely to do well this week. You might be unhappy in love. Children might prove troublesome. Be meticulous in business. dealings

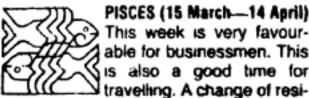
Good dates: 9, 10 and 11 Lucky numbers: 1, 4 and 7. Favourable direction: South



March) This is a particularly unfavourable week for OOOX politicians Competition on the professional front may

cause extreme anxiety. You may be deceived by a close friend or associate. You should muster up all your courage and determination to overcome this week's problems. On the domestic front, however you are likely to experience harmony.

Good dates: 6, 7 and 10. Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 9. Favourable direction: North-West.



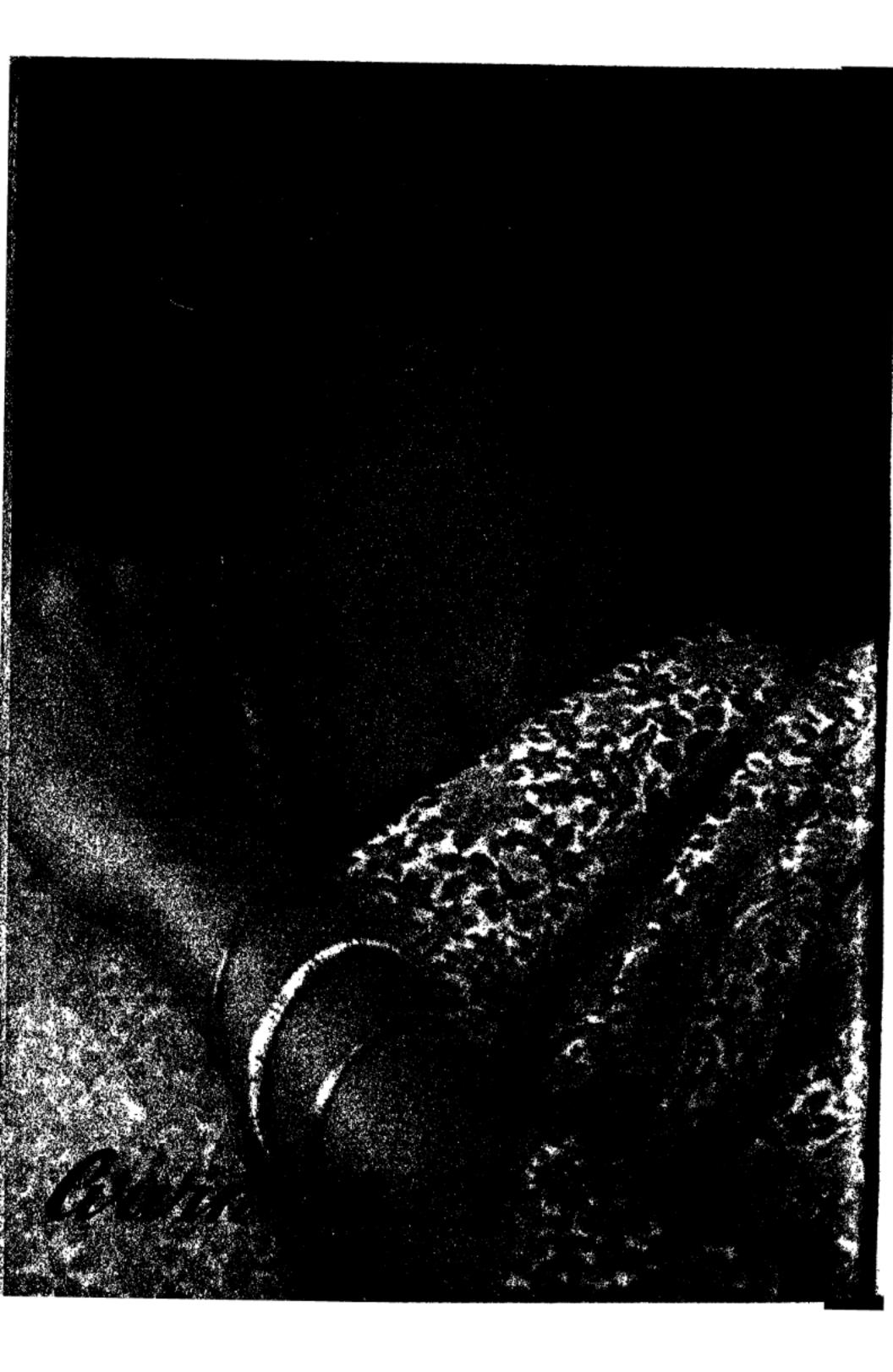
PISCES (15 March—14 April) able for businessmen. This This week is very favouris also a good time for

dence is likely. Your enemies may create problems for you, but try to handle such situations diplomatically. Do not be impulsive when taking crucial decisions. Keep a vigilant eye on the your health,

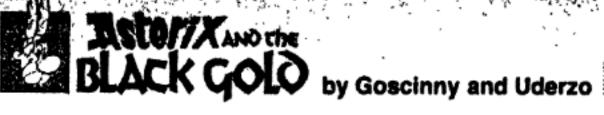
Good dates: 7, 6 and 11. Lucky numbers: 2, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: North.

For these born on Saturdays: You are generally fatalistic by temperament with the result that you often lose confidence in yourself. Fortune will only smile on you if you inculcate the desire to struggle. You will make a good politician if you push yourself.

You are also fickle minded and hence a word of caution: always have your decisions ratified by elders. You do not have the desire to help others with the result that you will have very few friends to help you out in your hour of need.



























This Andia



MANSA: Nearly 100 angry women could achieve in one day what repeated representations over a six-monthold complaint could not. They stormed the local municipal hall in Bhatinda while a meeting was in progress. The women entered the hall, snatched away agenda papers and the proceedings book and forced the committee members to adjourn the session. The demonstrators gheraged the committee president and members and forced them to march to Amrik Singh Road. They were shown sewer water flowing into several houses and kitchens. Some residents threw garbage on the elders to which they submitted meekly to avoid further humiliation. The public health staff of the civic committee were immediately deployed to clean the choked sewer.-- Times of India (Debadarshi Nayak, Cuttack)

KANPUR: Two young people, Miss Neelam Chaturvedi and Mr Suman Raj, decided to live as life partners without any ceremony or ritual. This unique marriage was blessed by not only the members of the two families but also a large number of social workers and intellectuals at a simple function at Khalasi lines here this evening. Miss Chaturvedi and Mr Raj have been in the forefront of the agitation launched here against dowry murders, and are also actively involved in a number of organisations like Mahila Mukti Morcha and Sakhee Manch, etc. They said they had decided to live as husband and wife on the basis of 'ideological agreement' since they had always opposed evil practices attached to ritual marriage ceremonies-Northern India Patrika (Arbind Gutgutia, Barabanki)

VIJAYAWADA: Thousands of applications flooded the sub-collector's office here following Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Mr N.T. Rama Rao's announcement at a meeting, that

houseless people could get sites from the collector "within an hour". On Monday, applications started trickling in, and by 12 May it was an avalanche. Thousands of people from all over the town, carrying sugar identity cards, obtained applications forms from private vendors, got them filled up by many opportunistic scribes who had set up shops for the purpose. The sub-collector took in the applications and stacked them up, waiting for instructions from higher authorities. The police were summoned on 12 May to drive away the scribes and vendors but they persisted in remaining. During the last 20 years only about 10,000 people have been allotted house sites with land acquired from private parties. There is very little government land left for distribution. Officials as well as Telugu Desam MLAs are flabbergasted by the development—The Hindu (S. Hariharasubramaniam, Madras)

NEW DELHI: Teachers and students of the Arabic department of Delhi University yesterday had to correct at least 40 mistakes in question paper IV of M.A. (final). The examination branch also failed to print paper IV of M.A. (previous) in Arabic. However, xeroxed copies of the examination paper, both typed and written by the examiner were dispatched in time to the examination hall. This was not the first time the examination branch had forgotten to print examination papers. On 5 May the examination branch had not even checked whether an examination paper for M.A. (final) Persian students had been printed until the teachers of the department made frantic inquiries just before the examination was scheduled to commence. Students waited in the examination hall as the officials had the paper stencilled. The unsealed stencil was brought to the Arts Faculty Office where the paper was cyclostyled and then distributed to the students. The paper did not even mention the time limit and the examination started half an hour behind schedule-Times of India (S. Narang, New Delhi)

HYDERABAD: A unique egg morcha was taken out in the twin cities by the National Egg Coordination Committee on the occasion of its first anniversary. As many as 30,000 hardboiled eggs were carried in a couple of decorated vehicles with participants carrying colourful placards with slogans on formation of poultry production. Later, the morcha was converted into a public meeting where various speakers explained the problems of poultry farmers in getting remunerative prices for their produce. The National Egg Coordination Committee is an association of poultry farms set up on 14 May last year to safeguard the interests of poultry farmers in the country-The Statesman (Rohini Sagar, Rishra)

Without Comment

We give the money so that Kashmir is strong. Because we believe that the strength of Kashmir is the strength of India—Mrs Gandhi, on the centre's financial assistance to Kashmir

It is very upsetting. I wrote those poems with such love, for me it is as if someone had defiled the sanctity of my emotions—Amrita Pritam, on the attack by the SGPC on her poems

He (NTR) is not a midwife (of a new opposition alliance)—H. N. Bahuguna

She (Mrs Gandhi) is trying for a shortcut to control power. In a country like India power shared is power preserved—shared with the party, and with the people—D. K. Barooah, in Current



I have not come as a messiah-Chandra Shekhar

He (G.M. Shah) will have no political role. He will sit at home— Farooq Abdullah

Samant only wanted to enter the Guinness Book of Records— Vasantdada Patil on Samant's refusal to come to the negotiating table to end the textile strike

It is the myth of Maneka rather than any proven competence of recognisable spirit of service that appeals to Amethi villagers— Sunanda K. Dutta—Ray in Statesman

I think in their hearts people know that our way is the one that will produce results. No glib talk, no reckless expenditure, no false promises. Just effort, inventiveness, quality, efficiency and reliability—Mrs Thatcher quoted in The Times, London



If all the world is a stage then we are the costumers for the world!
The currant is about to go up.
(act dressed for your part.

Make every act a hit.

From Manifest Comments

Residence of Section 1

Kasparov (Black) to move



Korchnoi (White)

Game of the decade

Epic first encounters between world class players are very rare in chess. Potential champions tend to enter the international arena at an early age, with the result that rivals will meet frequently in competition before reaching the apexes of their careers, as distinct, for example, from boxing, where two giants of the sport can climb opposite sides of the mountain before meeting at the summit for a first and possibly final showdown.

The famous Botvinnik-Fiecher encounter in the Varna Olympiad of 1962 was a memorable exception to this rule, where the iron man of chees had to struggle a pewn down in a rook and pawn ending against a young American he had never before met in his life.

Twenty years on in the Luceme Olymthe inconceivable happened. Korchnoi-Kasparov. Inconceivable because there is no way the two can meet in a normal tournament because of the Soviet boycott of Korchnoi. The encounter came about only because of the unexpected success of the Swiss team (for which Korchnoi plays) and the fact that Karpov that day stepped down from board one to. enable Kasperov to take over. The result was a game of such breathtaking complexity and sheer unbridled aggression that even Botvinnik-Fischer pales rather meekly into insignificance beside it.

It was a historic moment in chees, and

an immortal game.

White: V. Korchnoi Black: G. Kasperov Modern Benoni Defence

1 P-Q4 N-KB3 3 P-KN3 B-N2 5 P-Q5 P-Q3 2 P-Q84 P-KN3 4 B-N2 P-84 6 N-QB3 O-O 7 N-QB3 P-K3 **8** 0-0 PxP P-QR3 10 P-QR4 R-K1 9 PxP 11 N-Q2 QN-Q2 12 P-KR3 R-N1 13 N-84 N-K4 14 N-R3 Avoiding exchanges, White hopes to drive

the black knight back and assume complete control. 15 P-K4 R-B1 14

18 K-R2 P-B4 17 P-84 P-QN4 The fireworks begin. Suffice it to say that for the moment White dare not consider 18

PxN BxKP because the attack on his KN3 is difficult to parry.

18 Paliff Palif 13 NINSHIP PAP 20 Bul

Fighting hard to keep control. Still 26 Polit BxKP is a risky busi 20 . . B-02

严 40 美工、101 11 11 44 农场教育

And here 21 NoOP O-N3 22 ProN BicKP is

dengerous in the extrem Q-N3 22 N-R3 QR-K1

23 8-027 An oversight, though not an obvious one!

Out? Apparently suicidal, but If 24 KR-QN1 N-

86+11 and 25 BxN RxQ+ or 25 OxN Ox8+ 25 N-84 24 PxN BxKP (DIAGRAM) NxNPI

A more chectic position is difficult to

imagine, but Black is winning here.

26 RxR+ RxR 27 Q-K1 If 27 NxQ, NxQ+ wins the white NQB3. NxB+ 28 K-N2 Q-87? in fact a mistake allowing White to escape with a draw. Correct was 28 . . . R-87+ 29 QxR BxP+1 and if 30 KxB NxQ is check or 30 K-N1 or R1 loses the rook with check.

29 NxB #-87+ 30 CHR! NXC 31 R-R2 Q-B4 32 NxB 33 B-R6?

In time trouble missing the problem-like draw 33 R-R8+ K-N2 34 R-R7 Q-B7+ 35 K-R1 QxB 36 N-K5+! with perpetual check as the black king can never escape from rook checks because of a knight fork on K4 or QB4 (you can work the details out for yourself)

QxN 34 R-RS+ K-B2 35 R-R8 K-B3 36 K-B3 QxF+ and White resigned. A unique struggle.

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

Can you imagine a situation in which a declarer, holding A x opposite x x in a side suit, can make his contract only by ruffing the Ace? A Californian player, Sidney Lorvan, came across such a hand.

South opened with a conventional Two Clubs and the bidding continued:

| SOUTH | NORTH |
|-------|------------|
| 24 | 2♥ |
| 3♠ | 3 W |
| 34 | 5 . |
| 54 | 64 |
| NO | _ |

West led his singleton heart and South discarded a diamond. The Queen of spades held the next trick and declarer followed with a low spade to the Jack, leaving East with the King.

I dare say that most players would have done the same as South at this point. He played Ace of clubs, ruffed a club with 10 and was overruffed. He still had to lose a club and was one down.

After & J has held, it cannot be wrong to follow with Ace and King of clubs. East should refuse to ruff. South follows with Q. discarding a second diamond from dummy, and again East holds off. This leaves:

Now declarer ruffs the Ace of diamonds. discards two clubs on \ K.Q. and loses just one club at the finish.

terence reese

Many



During Mr Gladstone's first administration, 1868-74, the private telegraph companies were taken into public ownership under the Post Office. The various stamps leased by the companies for use on telegram forms were replaced in 1876 by an officel series comprising this 1d stamp and tan other values to £5. The series was withdrawn in 1881 and ordinary postage stamps were then used on telegrams. Over 60 other countries issued special stamps for telegrams and those have now been listed, Restrated and priced in "Calegraph and Telephone Stampe of the World", compiled and published by S.E.R. Hiscocks, PO Ben 77, Woking, Surrey (375pp., £15). C. W. HILL

- What is meant by the term 'flesh pressing?
- What is dixieland?
- Among the nine gems in the court of King Vikramaditya was a celebrated physician. Who was he?
- 4. In meteorology, what is theodolite?
- In classical mythology, who was Aurora?
- 6. With which sport-would you associate the term 'shoot out?'

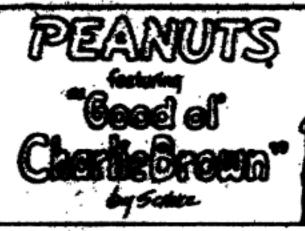
. Tato TOOME"

in a te-breaker are known as the 6, American, soccer, The twe penaltes 5. The Roman goddess of dawn. direction of the wind. ...

bne beegs and enusaem or encohed DINMONOL FOR DOCK STREET, THE SET !!

3. Chammantan.

An 1980 and quite popular now. 2. Rise & Jack Style Sorm in New Orleans . The US presidential compaign.















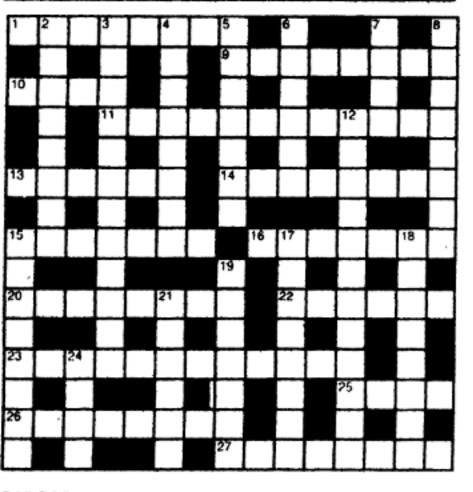






Sunday crossword

No. 7



ACROSS:

- The sewer era is necessary for hygienic disposal (8)
- 9. "Macbeth shall never--'d be" (Shakespeare) (8)
- Imitated the similar preceding 500 (4)
- 11 Car crated in east badly was imprisoned. (12)
- Bin rises to meet the enclosure, discovering a writing-point (3-3)
- 14. Does one have to rummage around to play this game? (8)

- 15 Declined-to join once more, it seems (7)
- 16 Flet's end is rather muddled-get fire-guards (7)
- 20. Matilda, a lot of trouble on the NE Adriatic coast (8)
- 22 Levying can be somewhat weansome. (6)
- 23. Tire, I can err right madily to get this dog (5, 7)
- 25. O friend, you're a gem! (4)
- 26 Suckles fifty, the unfortunate. (8)
- 27 The shard is in pieces, beaten (8)

DOWN:

- 2 'Ere viper writhes, get a pardon (8)
- 3 Apache totaller gets a warm spell in fall (6. 6)
- 4 Affable French friend gets a wire (8) 5 Twilight repose on a great height (7)
- 6 To make beloved, otic organ must follow conclusion (6)
- 7 This herb must make a lot of money (4)
- 8 D rushed south madly--how he shakes! (8)
- 12 To be so requires both workers to be equally adept (12)
- 15 Wildly san-clad party members (8)
- 17 Nati tree roughly, to find one who settles rule of descent of an estate (8)
- 18 Renew this oar event (8)
- 19 A strife that turns out the most pretty (7)
- 21 The bird showed the way, and was designated a name (6)
- 24 Cain is mixed up with an ancient civilisation (4)

Solutions to Sunnay Crossward No. 6

ACROSS

1 Baskervilles 9 Adenoidal 10 Kneel 11 Thatch 12 Mirrored 13 Debase 15 Succumbs 18 Spinster 19 Join 'em 21 Waterloo 23 Skeins 26 Ewers 27 Inamorata 28 In a twinkling

DOWN

Blasted 2 Sheba 3 Exorcises 4 Vide 5 Lilliput 6 Esker 7 Ferryman 8
 Blades 14 Bristled 16 Clockwork 17 Melodist 18 Sawyer 20 Mustang 22
 Resin 24 Iraqi 25 Dali

Compiled by Rita Tewari.

VAJPAYEE'S DEVOTION



Vajpayee: Godliness

THE BJP president Mr A. B. Vajpayee, suddenly disappeared from Bombay on 7 May, while the national executive of the party was in session. Mr Vajpayee was not in

Bombay on the night of 7 May but reappeared on the scene the next morning, to preside over the meeting. Where had the BJP chief suddenly gone? Was it for some secret political mission? No. He took the last flight out of Bombay that evening to keep a date with Goddess Durga. He flew to Delhi to attend a Bhagwati Jagaran kirtan organised by his party's metropolitan councillor, Mr Subhash Arya, at Rajouri Garden in Delhi. The main singer at the kirtan was Brig. Kapil Mohan, the soldier-cum-priest-cumpolitician who owns a leading liquor manufacturing firm and whose kirtans are extremely popular in north India. Mr Vajpayee sat through the kirtan the whole night and took an early morning Air India flight back to Bombay. Mr Vajpayee's devotion to Bhagwati is well known. After all, did he not refer to Mrs Gandhi as "Durga" after the 1971 war?

HIMACHAL CM'S PLANS GROUNDED

THE chief minister of Himachal Pradesh, Mr Veerbhadra Singh, is facing a dilemma. When he was the union deputy minister for tourism and civil aviation in 1976, he had initiated a file on the setting up of an airport in Simla. Since then, the state government has spent about Rs one crore on acquiring and levelling land at Jubber Hatti, 20 km from the capital of Himachal Pradesh, but the centre seems to have lost interest in the project. As the union deputy minister, Mr Veerbhadra Singh had got the project included in the sixth plan. When the Janata government scrapped the sixth plan and opted for the rolling plan instead, the Simla airport project rolled off the plan priorities. When the Congres-

s(I) came to power in 1980, Mr Veerbhadra Singh pressed for the project. As a result, the then tourism and civil aviation minister, Mr A. P. Sharma, promptly went to Jubber Hatti and laid the foundation stone. But when the officials looked for the original file initiated by Mr Veerbhadra Singh, it could not be traced. As a result, a second file on the project was initiated. And that has been the only tangible progress on the project. For the Himachal chief minister, not only is this project prestigious, but also important from the state's tourism point of view. But on seeing the progress" made so far, Mr Veerbhadra Singh is embarrassed. In the meantime, the cost of the proiect has more than doubled.

NUMBER ONE VS NUMBER TWO

TROUBLE is brewing in the Telugu Desam as the Andhra Pradesh chief minister and Telugu Desam's founder president, N. T. Rama Rao, is getting increasingly suspicious about the activities of N. Bhaskara Rao (NBR), ranked number two in the party. Soon after the Telugu Desam's massive victory, the Congress(I), in an attempt to divide the ruling party, sent word to NBR that Mrs Gandhi would like to meet him. After initial hesitation, NBR swallowed the bait and met Mrs Gandhi. He told Mrs Gandhi that but for the attitude of some of her followers in Andhra Pradesh he

would not have deserted her and joined the Telugu Desam. NTR is naturally, peeved about this. Another reason why NTR is unhappy with NBR is a sudden change in the attitude of the followers of Maneka Gandhi towards the Telugu Desam. They are now speaking quite openly against NTR. It was NBR, once the blue-eyed boy of Sanjay Gandhi, who had introduced Maneka to NTR and Andhra politics. It was on account of NBR that NTR had agreed to accept Maneka Gandhi's Sanjay Manch as Telugu Desam's ally in the last general election.

TOTAL ECLIPSE



Moily: in a hopeless mess

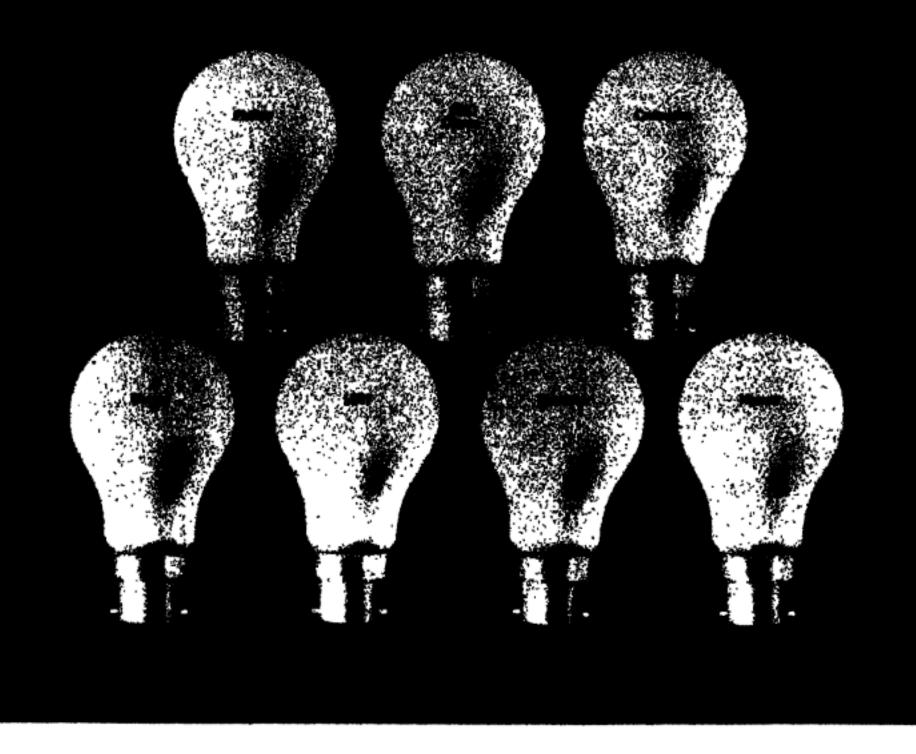
THE faction-ridden state unit of the Congress(I) in Karnataka is in deep crisis following the defeat of its candidate at the recent byelection in Kanakapura. There are four distinct factions in the Karnataka unit of the Congress(I). The leaders of these factions are: R. Gundu Rao. a former chief minister and a member of the party's central parliamentary board; Veerappa Moily, leader of the Congress(I) legislature party; C. K. Jaffar Sharief, union minister of state for railways; and, the master defector, H. C. Sreekantiah. All these leaders and their followers are now blaming each other for the party's debacle in the byelection. But what is worrying the Congress(I) High Command most is the possibility of a number of Congress(I) legislators defecting to the Janata Party. Since the installation of the Janata Party in the state Congress(I) leadership has been frying to keep up the flagging morale of the partymen by telling them that the chief minister, Ramakrishna Hegde, would never be able to win the byelection and his defeat would be the end of the Janata rule in the state. To defeat Hegge the Congress(1) was depending on the support of breakaway Kranti Ranga leader S. Bangarap-pa. Now with both the Congress(I) and Bangarappa having been humbled at Kanakapura, there is nothing that the Congress(I) leadership can offer to the partymen to keep alive their hopes of coming to power.

TAILPIECE: Like a cold it keeps coming back: rumours of Mrs Gandhi reshuffling her Cabinet. If the gossip in Parliament's central hall is to be believed then she might give her cabinet a new look soon.

D.E. NIZAMUDDIN

Make a wild guess

Who was the first to make lead-in wires for bulbs in India?



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GOOD YEAR

NYLON CAR TYRES



Kerala's matinee ido! Prem Nazır has finally decided to form his own political party, bringing to a rest three months of speculation that he was going to join the Congress(I). Although the star is yet to name his party, Nazir has already started campaigning on a low key by attending receptions and inaugural functions while contributing lavishly to charity. Will Nazir be as successful as his two other filmy counterparts from the neighbouring states, MGR and NTR? Anita Pratap analyses another southern film star's emergence into the political Page 20 arena.

Why is Libya's Colonel Muammar Qadhafi a hero in the eyes of his people but the world's greatest terrorist to the West? Since he came to power with his bloodless coup on 1 September 1969, he has stopped the exploitation by America on Libyan soil. He has also brought sweeping reforms for his people through his Third Universal Theory which gives power to the people from the grassroots level. Russy Karanjia recently met Col Qadhafi to assess the significance of Qadhafi's rule. Page 28



The ghastly massacres at Nellie and Gohpur in Assam in February could have been avoided if the government had paid heed to early warnings flashed by the local administration. Arun Shourie cites wireless and telex messages to show how a callous state machinery, along with politicians interested in pursuing their own settleh ends aggravated the tragedy. Page 38

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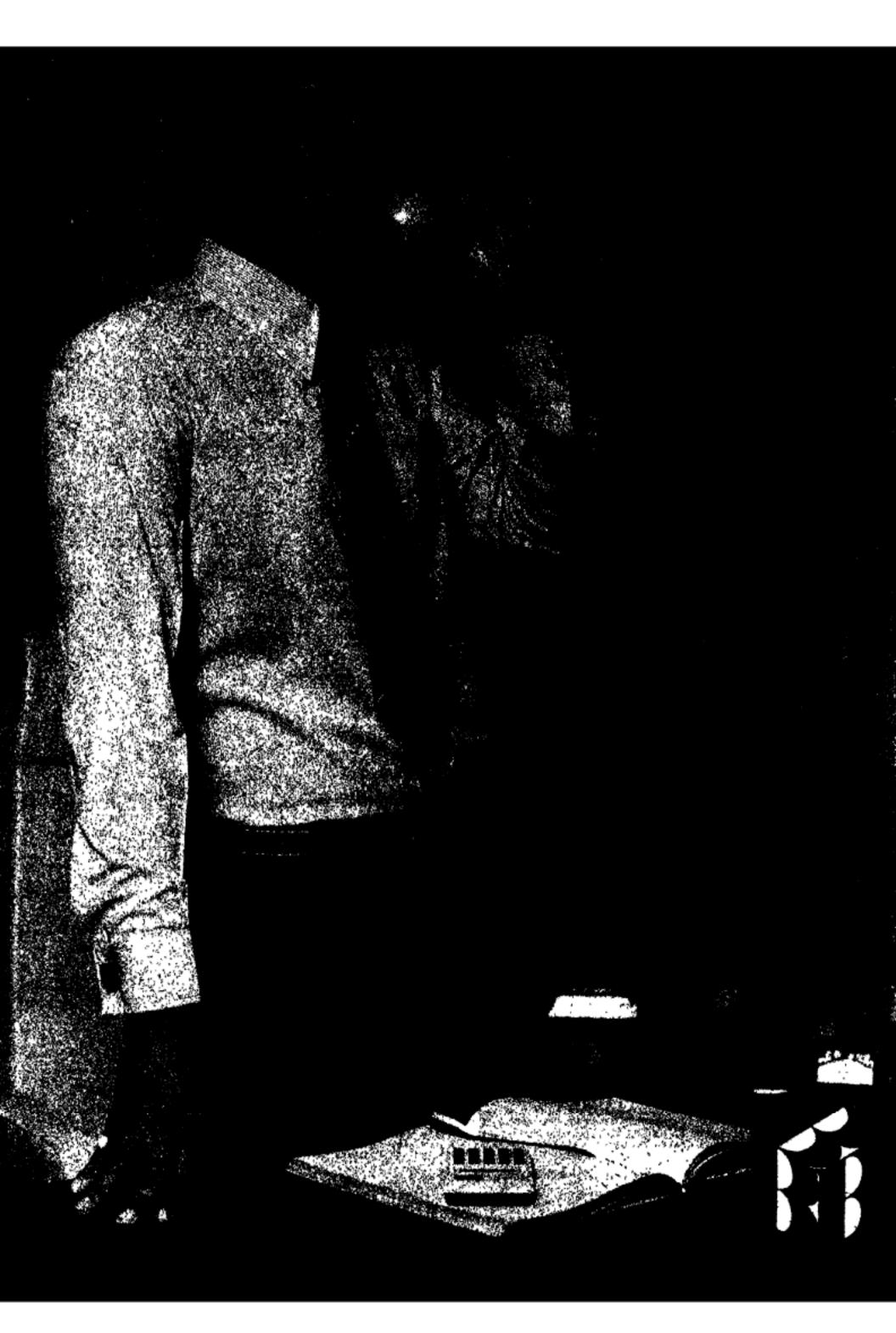
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Erasmic Supreme

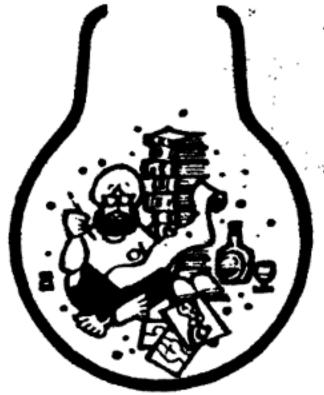
とはない マンス かんしん 一方面 はない かんじょう アーニー アー

we aspects of Indira Gandhi's A character that we, her countrymen, have always admired above her many other qualities are the dignity with which she deports herself and the way she keeps her cool in the most trying circumstances. There is something regal about her bearing; a single rose-blossom rising above a bed of weeds that are her comperes. She is also known to have nerves of steel and remain totally unruffled in crises where lesser mortals have been known to crumple up like deflated balloons. The dignity is still there; the steel nerves are beginning to jangle and show signs of strain. She can still face major problems like Assam and Punjab with equanimity; but when it comes to a whipper-snapper like her daughter-in-law she loses self-restraint. How else does one explain her describing Maneka Gandhi as a "plant" (not once but twice), breaking down in public as she did in Lucknow and ralk about the appropriate wear for a widow and the unseemliness of suhaag attire within ten days of Sanjay's death? Does she not realise that everytime she says something derogatory about Maneka, it is her own image as the imperiously, unflappable woman-in-command that gets eroded and Maneka gains more adherents? This was so in the manner Mrs Gandhi witheld and later allowed Maneka's book on Sanjay to be released, and the words she used when expelling her from No 1, Safdarjang Road. And it is true of her last two statements about her being a "plant" and her allegedly improper behaviour. Don't anyone of her friends, if she has any, tell her that such utterances are unwise and counterproductive? And that, if Maneka is fast becoming a national figure she owes most of it to Indira Gandhi?

The most quotable lingo

Without doubt the most quot-able of all Indian languages is Urdu. Whether it s Gyani Zail Singh speaking Punjabi, Chaudhary Charan Singh speaking Haryanvi, Atal Behari Vajpayee speaking theth Hindi, Babu Jagjivan Ram or Tarakeshwari Sinha speaking in their Bihari dialects, when it comes to emphasising a point by an apt quotation they invariably pick on Urdu. And somehow it is to Urdu that all audiences respond to spontaneously. Even before the hammiest of Urdu couplets is completed the audience begins to applaud as if compulsively with wah! wah!

This is good enough evidence to



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

maintain that Urdu is the richest language of northern India and despite official neglect remains the most loved. Now that a lot of Urdu verse is being published in Devanagari, it will get a longer lease of life and in return enrich Hindi. My only regret is that nothing is being produced in the Roman script. There are millions of educated Indians who cannot read either the Arabic or the Devanagari script but understand and speak Hindustani. If Urdu poetry were also published in the Roman script, it would further ensure Urdu's immortality.

L. C. Randhir's book Ghazal: The Beauty Eternal (Milind Publications) is devoted to expounding the elements of love, mysticism, nature in the Urdu ghazal and its role in Indian vocal music. In so doing he has embellished his theme with some memorable quotations. On the essential qualities of a good ghazal he cites Asghar:

Asghar, ghazal men chahiye voh mau j-i-zindagi,

Jo husn hai buton men, jo masti sharab men.

A ghazal must have the waves of joy of life;

The beauty of the beauteous one And the headiness of wine.

The ghazal is largely devoted to the pangs of love, the joys of the tavern and scorning the puritan. When it comes to women the Urdu poet did what Diderot recommended-dip his pen in the colours of the rainbow, scatter the dust from butterflies' wings on the page and with every movement of his hand let drop a pearl.

Heiress presumptive:

hope Swrai Paul's bid to gobble up juicy Indian business houses will put the wind up in the bellies of those who continue to regard them as their ancestral property. The majority of them do so. They wangle appointments of their children and relatives on board of directors, provide them large salaries and perks which are often more than three times their salaries. They have no right to do so because most of these youngsters are not qualified to hold high posts and have no managerial training simply because their fathers are Sultans: pidaram Sultan bood. They squander the companies' wealth when their families' investment in those companies are of meagre proportions. I know innumerable cases where boys just out of college have been made directors of a company on a salary of Rs 7500 per month and their perks have included a free furnished house, a chauffeurdriven-and-company-maintained car, domestic servants, doctors and chemists bills, memberships of the swankiest clubs, unlimited entertainment against production of bills (they entertain their cronies in the most expensive restaurant) and much else. If the tax people object to some items on the expense account, they simply put them under different headings. I came across an amusing case of confrontation between an income-tax officer and a business house of Nagpur in M. R. Kohli's new publication Search for Managers and Art of Selecting Senior Executives. An item in the companies books read: "Anae Kumar, Director, Monthly Salary Rs 7500."

The taxman asked who this Anae Kumar was. After some fumbling the accountant replied: "Anae Kumar means the Kumar yet to come (anae is Hindi for coming). The wife of the owner of the firm is

"What happens if she does not have a son but a daughter?" asked the taxman.

Came the prompt reply: "Sir, then we will change the name to Anae Kumari!"

Southern humour

Why does M. G. Ramachandran wear dark glasses?
Because the Tamilians are so

Why does N. T. Rama Rao wear a caste mark in his forehead?

Because he wants to remain in the forefront of the chief ministers. Why does Ramakrishna Hegde

sport a beard? Because he did not want to win by

a close shave.

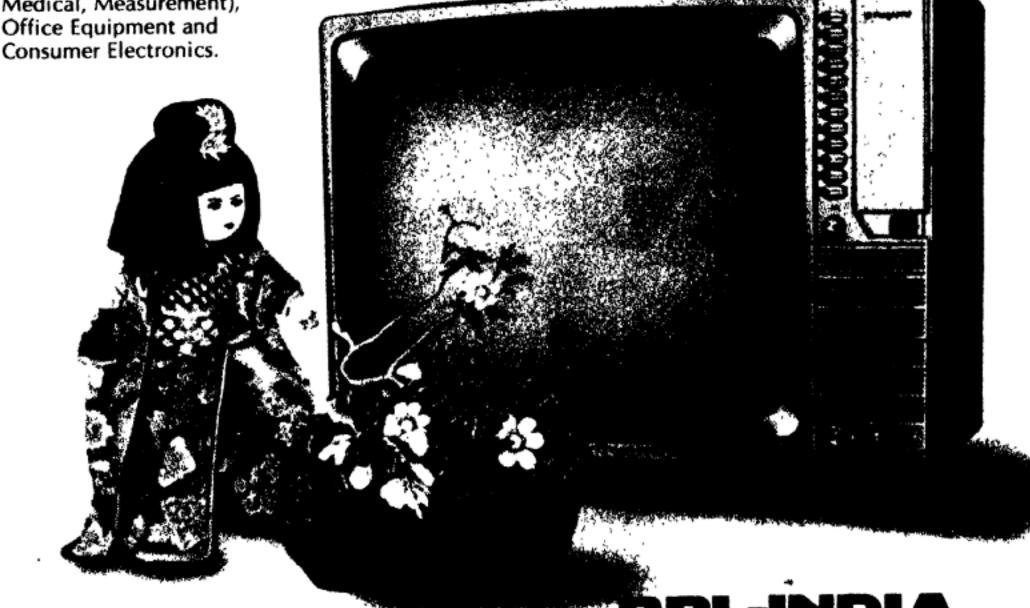
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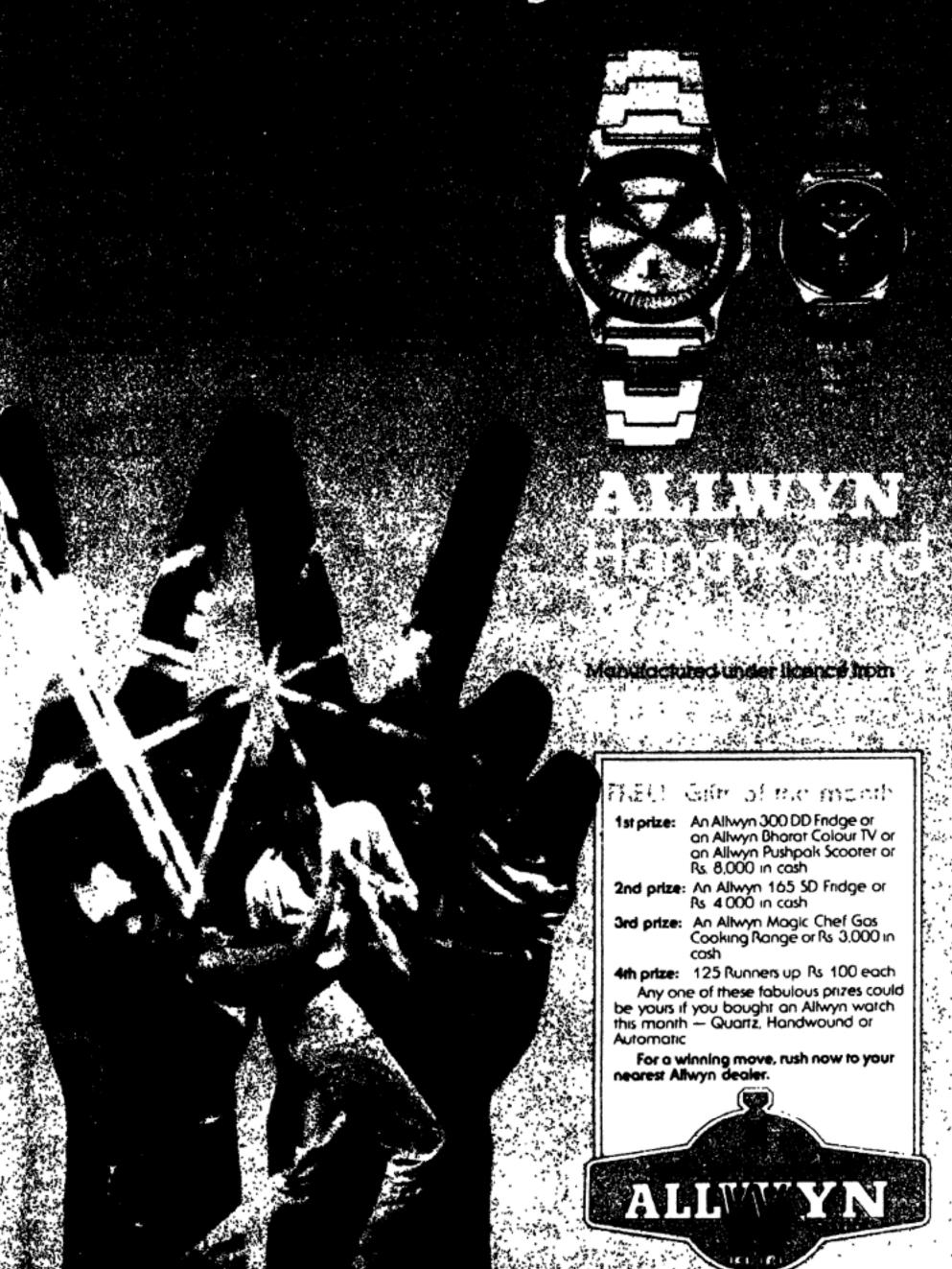


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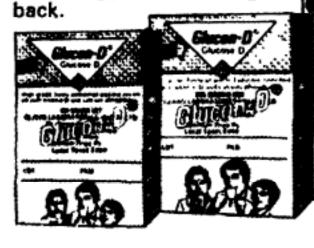


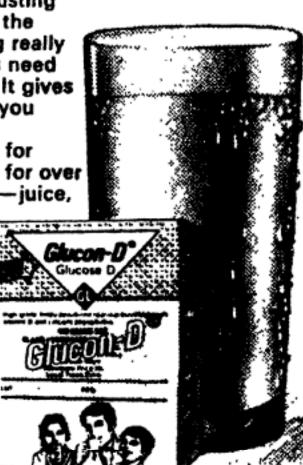


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Kashmir must enjoy a special status

hen Sheikh Abdullah was reinstalled as chief minister in 1975 (though the Congress was, at that time in a majority in the state Assembly), it was apparent that New Delhi had travelled full circle and had realised the futility of keeping him out of power, as the Kashmir problem had got more tangled in his absence. Mir Qasim, who gave up the chief ministership for the Sheikh, was the architect of that accord, and he subsequently exerted his influence to placate Mrs Gandhi whenever she was angered by the Sheikh's pronouncements, which were often friendly neither to her nor to the centre.

It was not an ideal arrangement but there was no alternative. New Delhi had tried other methods and had learnt from experience that by keeping the Sheikh out of power or even in prison it was doing more harm than good. The state had looked as if it was under siege despite all the Congressmen sitting in the Assembly. Today, Mrs Gandhi's efforts before and during the state Assembly poll have shown that she is trying to follow the same path which had earlier led New Delhi nowhere. She seems to have forgotten that without understanding and cordiality between New Delhi and Srinagar, there cannot be peace in the sensitive state.

This explains why Mir Qasim who is now a respected leader among the Kashmiris, has stayed aloof, despite being a member of the Congress(I) high command. He suspects Mrs Gandhi's motives. And he minces no words in arguing that her policy on Kashmir is wrong and that by trying to instal the Congress(I) in the state, she is committing the same mistake which was made when Sheikh Abdullah was ousted in 1954.

It appears that Mir Qasim may leave the Congress(1) if Mrs Gandhi continues to seek the party's ends in Kashmir. It is significant that he did not go with her on her tour in Kashmir and went to meet her at the airport only at her request. I wish he had come out in the open before the Assembly poll.

Talking to Dr Farooq Abdullah, one finds that he has the same suspicions about New Delhi, which his father, Sheikh Abdullah, had entertained. Dr Farooq Abdullah believes that Mrs Gandhi is trying to whittle down the special status of Kashmir even at the expense of dividing the state into a Hindu Jammu and Muslim Kashmir. The pity is, that at one time he was so close to her that he had gone to Delhi to campaign for her party during the recent union territory polls.

The hiatus between Dr Abdullah and Mrs Gandhi have only heightened the fears of many people in the state. It was in a bid to exploit them that Mirwaiz Moulvi Farooq raised the plebiscite issue—something which he had himself abandoned six years ago. He had been flattered at being hotly pursued by the Congress(I) for an alliance. In-

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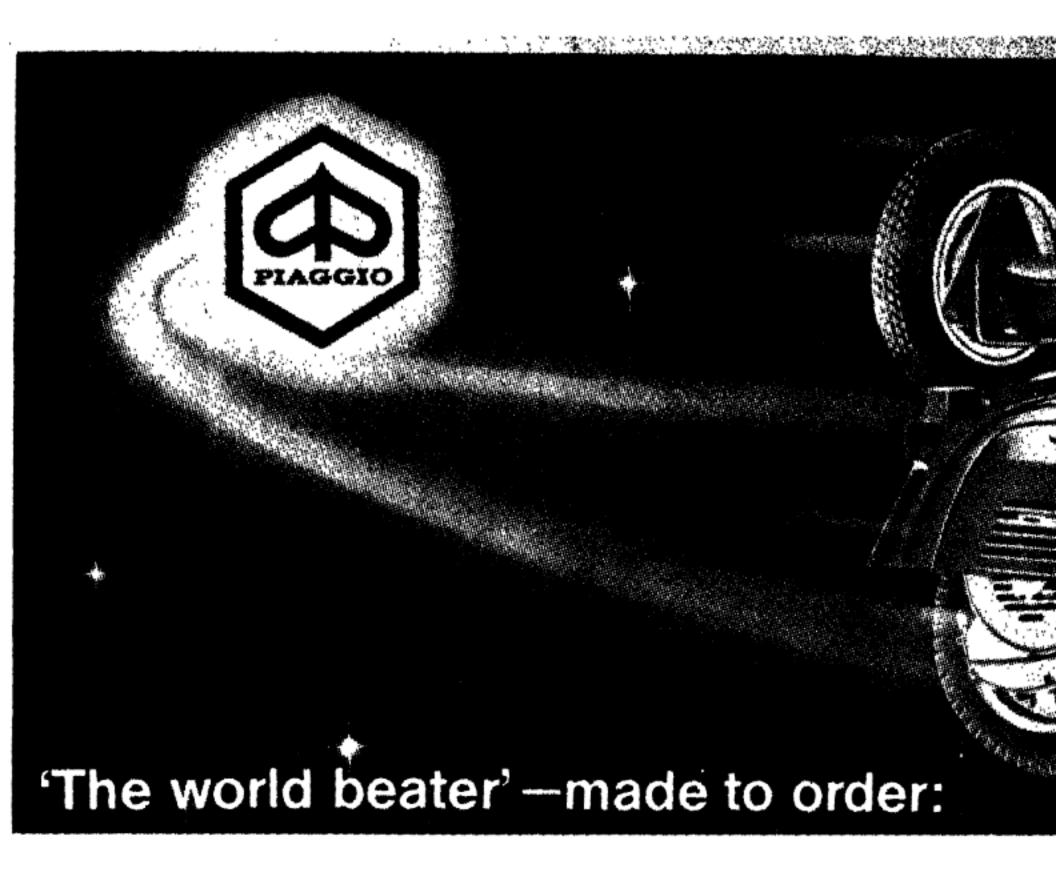
deed, the Congress(I) had hoped till the last minute that he would support it and that was why the Srinagar radio station made an announcement about the meeting. But after he made the speech that put him on the other side of the fence and alongside Dr Abdullah, the news was omitted from Srinagar radio's coverage.

When I asked Mirwaiz Moulvi Farooq why he had revived the plebiscite issue, he was on the defensive and said that he had only highlighted the fears of the Kashmiris about the "cultural onslaught of India." He told me that he was not reported correctly and, going through the written version of his speech, I found that he had much to say about broken promises by the Congress and had also made a passing reference to the right of selfdetermination. Which is not to say that he did not say what he was reported to have said. The press seemed to have erred only in giving it an emphasis that the speaker did not intend.

During my interview I found that he was reluctant to admit that he had talked about a plebiscite. He said, "You know that one is apt to become emotional before a gathering of three lakh people and say something which he did not mean to say." Asked why he refused to call himself an Indian, he first tried to evade the question and ultimately said, "Where is Mahatma Gandhi's India?" I asked whether Pakistan was better. He said, "No, not at all, it is worse."

My feeling is that he was looking for an opportunity to be in the limelight and he was so carried away that he could not resist raising the plebiscite issue. Whatever his reasons, he has once again created confusion in the minds of the Kashmiris. The way Dr Abdullah has denounced Moulvi Farooq's demand for a plebiscite makes me believe that he, for one, would have no truck with the Moulvi if he continues to make irresponsible statements.

I do not think that the Kashmiris would allow themselves to go through the same traumatic experience which they had when they were misled in the name of plebiscite or right of self-determination. And Mrs Gandhi also is bound to realise that the accord which she herself reached with Sheikh Abdullah must be honoured when his son is at the helm of affairs. Jawaharlal Nehru had made the National Conference an associate member of the Congress. Why could Mrs Gandhi not do that? Kashmir should not only enjoy a special status but also look like it does. Too much subservience to the centre can only rouse fears and give an opportunity to the anti-Indian elements in the state to exploit the situation.





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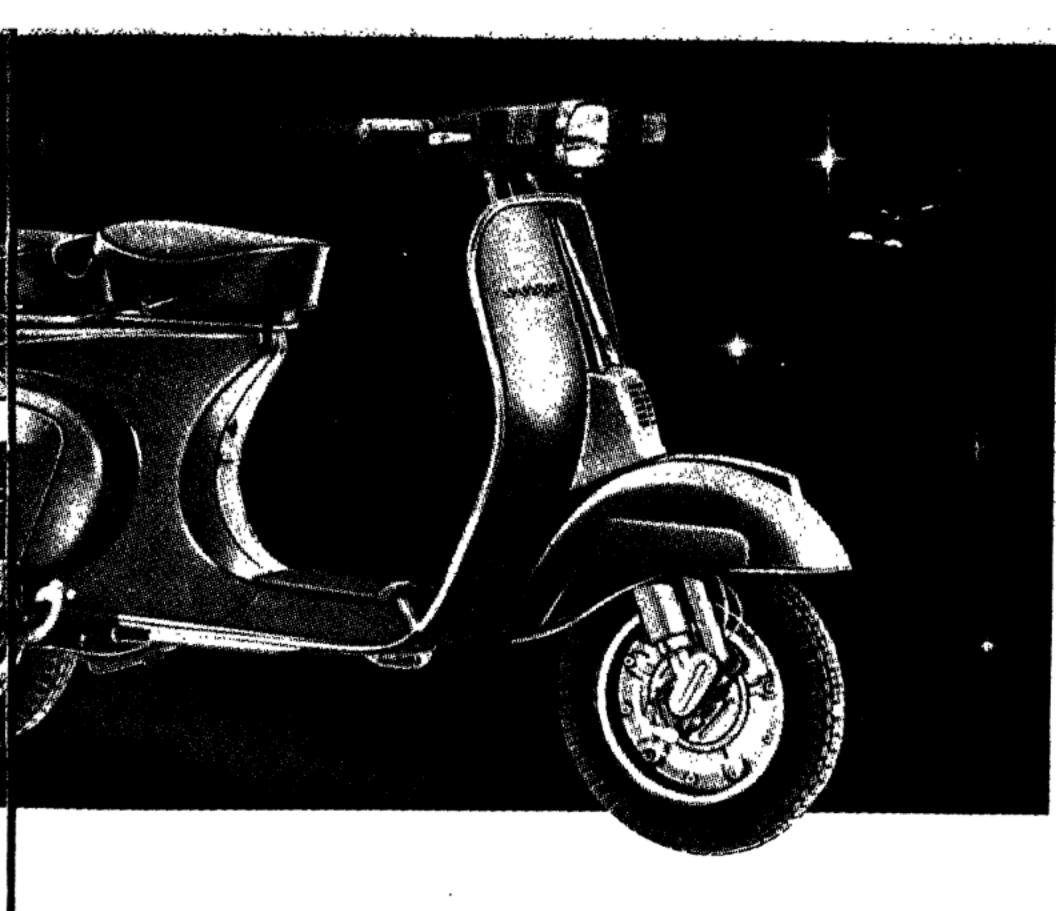
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Dangerous game

The special issue on Punjab (The violent search for Khalistan, 15 May) was timely. By interviewing the agitation leaders, Sunday revealed the hollowness of their arguments. The Sikhs are a progressive race and it is indeed ironical that a section of this successful community is raising the issue of being discriminated against and fanning religious sentiments for purely political reasons. The strong and silent majority of the Sikhs must raise its voice before further damage is done.

J. S. Brara, Dhanbad

The special issue gave a comprehensive account of the nature of the demands put forward by the Akali leaders. A brilliant issue indeed M. P. Jam. Howrah

The special issue was well compiled. The main story by Tavleen Singh and the interviews gave one a clear idea of the Punjab situation. The Sikhs today are certainly a misguided lot.

V. Ganapathy, Calcutta

. .

The cover story made interesting reading. Since extremists are guiding the present movement in Punjab, the government should deal with the situation firmly.

Shakuntala Rao, New Delhi

The politicians and the press are responsible for the present explosive situation in Punjab. Nehru had once said, "The brave Sikhs of Punjab are entitled to special consideration and I see nothing wrong in setting up in the North an area where the Sikhs can also experience the glow of freedom." This statement by Nehru is now misinterpreted by Akali extremists and they are demanding the creation of a new Sikh nation.

The press too is responsible for aggravating the situation. Incidents are being blown up beyond proportion creating tension. A much more mature and responsible role is expected from the press at this crucial stage. Surender Singh Hothi, Purnia

The cover story revealed the hostilities of the militant Sikhs who are bent upon the creation of Khalistan even at the cost of national unity. It was also painful to learn that the Sikhs consider themselves to be alien from the Hindus. After the partition of the country the Hindus and the Sikhs who migrated from West Punjab were bound together by their common heritage and mutual sufferings. It seems that the Akali agitators have forgotten history. Param Hans Singh, Arrah

I agree with Ms Tavleen Singh that communal forces and power-hungry politicians have taken over the reins in Puniab.

Binod Ringania, Gauhati

The Sikhs are known for their valour, but I was surprised to read the childish arguments put forward by their leaders in defence of their demands. One of the leaders compared the kirpan to the sacred thread which the brahmins wear. I never expected such brave people to be so illogical. Kaushik Brahma, Darbhanga

The Sikhs are playing a dangerous game. People like Bhindranwale are destroying the image of the Sikhs. A feeling that they are not Indians is being infused in them. This is nothing but brainwashing. The government should take immediate steps to tackle the situation.

Md Ehtesham Aslam Usmani, Bakhtiarpur

The government should immediately arrest the criminals hiding in the Golden Temple. It is surprising that Ms Singh could meet Sant Bhindranwale and Harminder Singh Sandhu while the police authorities were helpless in arresting them even though there are specific criminal charges against them. Sami Akhtar Khan, Gaya

Extremist elements have taken over the movement in Punjab. The government should deal with them firmly. Manoranjan Sahu, Kansbahal (Orissa)

The interview with Amrita Pritam ('Punjab is the land of fighters, saints and lovers') was baffling. The replies given by the poetess were evasive and there was a tendency to drag the interview away from the main question. At times it seemed that she was favouring the Sikhs but at the same time she was afraid to antagonise the Hindus. S. K. Narula, New Delhi

Amrita Pritam gave one the impression that she was deliberately avoiding the questions put forward by Ms Jain. A writer of her fame should be bold and candid enough to suggest solutions. Baldev Raj. Lahaul (IIP)

This has reference to the interview with Harminder Singh Sandhu ('The father of the Sikh nation is Guru Govind Singh, not Gandhi'). His comments on Islam is based on a shallow understanding of the religion. Islam is based on the concept of universal brotherhood and hence the question of discrimination does not arise. Everyone is allowed to enter a mosque irrespective of his religion.

Chowdhury Nisar Ahmed, Ambur (Tamil Nadu)

H. S. Sandhu's view, that the Nepalese are living within India yet enjoying autonomy, is not true.

Laxmi Pradhan, Kurseong

I was shocked to go through the interviews with Sant Bhindranwale ('Death is a game for a Sikh') and Sant H. S. Longowal ('Nobody with a beard was allowed to enter Delhi during the Asiad'). Their arguments were illogical and inflammatory.

In the course of the interview, Sant Bhindranwale had compared the janoi (sacred thread worn by the Hindus) with the kirpan. But the leader should realise that the kirpan is being misused

by miscreants.

Again Sant Longowal pointed out that the Sikhs were discriminated against in the army. In the recruitment of army personnel a Sikh is expected to be taller than his counterparts, complains the Sant. But this has nothing to do with religion. This is only in keeping with geographical conditions influencing physical stature.

In their respective interviews Sant Bhindranwale and Sant Longowal criticised the government's action of preventing Akalis from entering Delhi during the Asiad. But one must keep in mind the threat held out by the Akalis. Extremism should not be tolerated. V. S. Goswami. New Delhi

Amulya Nath Pandit, Mussoorie

Sant Bhidranwale's allegation that the Sikhs are looked down upon in India is not true. In this connection I would like to remind him that the present President is a Sikh. The Air Chief Marshall and the governor of the Reserve Bank are also Sikhs. The Sant is a religious fanatic whose political ambitions must be curbed immediately. Brajesh Mishra, Rourkela

Most of Sant Bhindranwale's comments were based on wrong information. In this context I would like to mention one such case. The Sant mentions that Mrs Gandhi was held guilty in 1977 by the Supreme Court and sent to the Tihar jail. This Is certainly not true. Indu Mehta, Indore

Sant Bhindranwale has declared a dharamyudh without understanding the significance of the word. A lot of blood is being shed unnecessarily in Punjab.

M. Ansari, Bhabua

Changing colour?

When I read Khushwant Singh's piece on the Prime Minister's piece on the Prime Minister's grandson in Gossip sweet and sour (3 April), my first reaction was one of annoyance against Mrs Indıra Gandhi. I felt that the little one was entitled to her affection and tender care in every possible way. I wanted to write to her about it, knowing fully well that I had no business to interfere in her domestic affairs. However, suddenly I was reminded of Khushwant Singh's brotherhood of malice and fellowship with Amteshwar Anand and her family. I thought it advisable to ascertain facts from R. K. Dhawan who is close to the Gandhi family, and with whom I have a nodding acquaintance.

On 5 April 1983 I requested him to let me know if what had appeared in SUNDAY about Mrs Gandhi's grandson was correct or not. He kindly sent me a

detailed letter which said:

"The report is absolutely false and mischievous... He (Khushwant Singh) has been very uncharitable in levelling such insinuations.

"It was some time towards the end of March 1982 when Smt. Maneka Gandhi decided to shift from 1, Safdarjung Road. At the time of her leaving, the PM told her that she would like Varun to visit her and the family as often as possible. Smt. Maneka Gandhi promised to send him every Sunday. Varun did come to 1. Safdarjung Road on one or two Sundays, but Smt. Maneka Gandhi suddenly discontinued the practice.

"The Prime Minister would wait for Varun on Sundays and we had to remind Smt. Maneka Gandhi. At times, she would not attend the telephone and we got the reply from the servants that Varun had gone to her *nanı* and that he would not be coming. We contacted Smt. Anand's house and were told that they had no instructions to send Varun to 1, Safdarjung Road. On a number of occasions when Mrs Maneka Gandhi was out of Delhi, the same reply was given to us by the servants. I spoke to Smt. Maneka Gandhi on her return from one of her tours about it and she promised that when she went on tour next, she would instruct the servants and her mother to send Varun to the PM's house on Sundays. Unfortunately, this did not happen and Varun never came to the Prime Minister's house when Smt. Maneka Gandhi was out of Delhi.

"On one occasion, I remember, we were told that Varun was not well. It was totally false as I myself had seen Varun playing on the lawns that very morning as I happen to stay in the same locality. On a number of occasions, not getting any response on the telephone, we sent a car to fetch him but he was

not sent.

"One day she (Maneka) told me that she would no longer send Varun as we were indulging in propaganda against her. This was also totally baseless as none of us did any such thing. On the contrary, reports were pouring in from all quarters that Smt. Maneka Gandhi and her associates had stooped very low in their vilification campaign

against the PM and her family. Varun's not visiting naturally upset the PM, but there was no remedy.

"On Varun's birthday this year, the PM desired that we should make an attempt to persuade Smt. Maneka Gandhi to send Varun at least on his birthday. I contacted Smt. Maneka Gandhi and very reluctantly, she agreed to send him on the condition that he would not stay there for more than half an hour Varun did come but just after 15 minutes of his arrival, telephone calls started coming from Smt. Maneka Gandhi that he should be sent back immediately. I was shocked at the language she used at the top of her voice and the allegations she levelled. Varun went back after staying for hardly about 20 minutes."

I am surprised that an experjenced and intelligent man like Khushwant Singh could also be duped by those whose only allies are lies, or is he a willing victim of fanciful untruths?

P.D. Tandon, Allahabad

Mr Singh now seems to have good thoughts on Assam (Stray thoughts on Assam) after earlier advocating the banning of the movement through editorials in Hindustan Times. I welcome Mr Singh to come to Assam and see for himself how the cause of the Assamese is being misreported by irresponsible reporters and editors of the Indian press as a whole and the West Bengal based ones in particular. Biraj Mohan Roy, Bongaigaon

Common man's CM

The item, On the right track (Delhi Diary, 22 May), contained a piece of wrong information. We want to make it clear that in early May, the chief minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, went to Delhi by a first class AC sleeper coach of the Rajdhani Express and returned to Calcutta by the same mode of reservation in the Deluxe Express. On either journey, he did not travel by any special saloon as reported.

S. Bandyopadhyay, press secretary to

the chief minister

D.E. Nizamuddin replies:

Yes, indeed Mr Jyoti Basu did not travel by a special saloon but in a first class AC sleeper coach attached to the Rajdhani Express. The error is regretted. However, the initial proposal from the railway ministry was to provide the ailing CM with the special facility as reported by us. When Mr Jyoti Basu turned down the offer, the railway ministry decided to terminate the Raj**dhani Express that day at platform No.** one of the New Delhi station, so that the chief minister would not have to cross the overbridge from the usual platform where the train normally terminates. The intention while reporting the incident was not to point out the **special facilities extended** to the chief minister, but to highlight the human aspect—the gesture of Mr Ghani Khan Chaudhury, railway minister, to his political opponent, which is rather rare these days.

I wonder how Khushwant Singh wrote about the Assam problem without knowing the reasons for the agitation. From the article I gather that even if the government comes forward to take any decisions people like Mr Singh will try to prevent it. Instead of condemning the central government he tries to find fault with the opposition parties for the elections. The opposition parties have always cooperated with the government in this aspect. But Mr Singh has always been known for changing colour because till recently he happened to be the mouth-piece of the Gandhı family.

V. Rajagopalan, Sriramapuram

By projecting things which are not true, Mr Singh has sullied historical facts. Actually large numbers of Hindus from East Pakistan migrated into Assam by exchanging properties with Muslims of Assam. Then came the 1950 riots when lakhs of Muslims were driven out. Mr Singh has suggested that the Assam press be made free. Here freedom has to be differentiated from license to publish anything the press likes. The recent troubles are in no mean degree due to the irresponsible reporting in some Assam dailies. Maziruddin Ahmed, Goalpara, Assam

Khushwant Singh's solution to the Assam problem is devoid of any practical significance. Or is it only a variation of his style of humour?

V. Ramaprasad, Kakinada

Misunderstood

This has reference to my interview published in SUNDAY ('There might be a mid-term poll next year', 15 May). Some errors, partly typographical and partly due to inadequate understanding of technical and astrological terms, have occurred.

 On page 45 under the photograph of Mrs Gandhi the caption should read as follows: Saturn is to enter the house of Mars where Surya is placed (in 1985) She will have to be careful about

The answer: Mars is in the Lord of her house...should be read as Mars is in the house of Sun and Sun in the house of Mars which has given her so much

energy.

3. On page 45 in the answer to the question regarding Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, the first five lines should be amended to read as follows: The Ashtama Saturn cycle is starting in 1985 and the period is not a good period for health-basically for kidneys and blood-though politically achievements can come.

Ramakrishna Sarathy, New Delhi

Fitting tribute

The review of the Indo-West Indies series by Ashis Ray. West Indies vs Amarnath (15 May) was quite illumi-The heading is a tribute to Mohinder. B. N. Bose, Jamshedpur

Premilers Energies sor

The star-crossed political firmament of the south is witnessing the emergence of yet another star: Kerala's Prem Nazir who has acted in 600 films. Recently, after an illustrious film career spanning over three decades, the 54-year-old matinee idol announced that he was forming his own regional political party to "purify the socio-economic, cultural and political life" of the people of his state. Will Prem Nazir, following in the footsteps of his *filmi* counterparts, NTR and MGR, be able to create a similar wave? ANITA PRATAP, who toured Kerala to file this report, analyses Prem Nazir's chances of success as a politician.

he Guinness Book of World Records carries his name for having acted in the maximum number of films: 600 at the latest count Perhaps, the next entry will also carry something new; that in addition to his numerous films he is also a politician. The star with 600 films to his credit with aspirations of becoming a political star, is Prem Nazir.

Nazır was born Abdul Khader. Considered a gentleman actor of the Malayali screen, Khader was given his screen name, Prem Nazir, by his first producer who believed in numerology and who also felt that name would symbolise Hindu-Muslim unity. But it was not numerology which made Prem Nazir take up politics. As he himself said in his interview, it was his sincere desire to do good for the people.

Prem Nazir embarked on his latest role around three months ago, when he decided to join politics. His decision did not cause much of a stir: after all, weren't two of his counterparts in the neighbouring states already chief ministers? But what did raise eyebrows was Nazit's decision to form his own political party. Initially, everyone had thought that the star would be joining the Congress(I), a party in which he has a number of friends and relatives. But he surprised everybody when he said that he would not be joining any of the existing parties since these parties had tarnished their reputations. As yet unnamed, Nazir claims his

Nazu among his memorabilia: 'General atmosphere is completely corrupt'



party will emerge as the 'Third Force' in Kerala politics, emanating from the clash between the two forces comprising the United Demo 2 cratic Front (UDF) and the Left

Democratic Front (LDF).

Nazir proposes to fish for political luck from the planks of secularism and one-party rule. In fact, he has already started campaigning indirectly by attending receptions and inaugural functions, telling the gathering, "All existing parties had failed to safeguard the spirit of secularism," that "the growing communalism and casteism had to be fought vigorously," that "the need of the hour is to purify the socioeconomic, cultural and political life" and that "while the country could be proud of the successful conduct of the Asiad and Non-Aligned Summit, the basic needs of the people like drinking water remained a dream." His party will have no truck with any existing party but will be purely regional in character, very much along the lines of the Telugu Desam. While Nazir is yet to chalk out the details, his plans, programmes and party ideology are ambiguous and nebulous. But what he is certain about is his credo: "Respect the feelings of others,"

A controversy that emerges with filmstars turning into politicians is the question of what is more important: ideological conviction that characterises the older generation of politicians or the spirit of altruism which is the plank on which filmstars try to get elected. Those of the first category have proven intellectual and administrative capabilities but fawning sycophancy makes their motives suspect. Those from the world of films are ignorant of ideology and government machinery but they have moral integrity which is viewed with far less suspicion by the masses. MGR, NTR and now Prem Nazir reiterate that all their personal and domestic commitments have ended and they have turned to politics to serve the common man. The average Keralite does not suspect Nazir's bonafides: he is known as a professional artiste, punctual and under-standing, and he is respected as a benefactor because of his generous contributions to charity. In fact, his donations are easily seen: Cheriyankil, 25 km from Trivandrum, Nazir's native place, boasts of several institutions that speak volumes for his munificence.

Nazir's political success—and there is little doubt that he will not do well in the electoral battlesis not a natural corollary of NTR's spectacular victory in Andhra Pradesh, Neither can Prem Nazir emulate the NTR act: the Malayali temperament and the political climate, unlike in the neighbouring states, are not conducive to matinee idols taking to politics. The average Keralite is more politically conscious



Nazir and Latha in Love in Singapore,: will he win; hearts?

and naturally, politics and administration of the state is considered serious business requiring the expertise of experienced professionals. Flowery rhetoric mouthed by most politicians is thrown to the winds. What does impress the politically aware Malayalis are policies and programmes, ideological conviction and above all, implementation of the programmes. As a Keralite put it very succinctly to this correspondent: "You dangle something that is concrete and tangible, and the Malayali is certain to bite. Otherwise, he has no qualms of spitting it

back at your face."

Political observers are sanguine that it will be very difficult for a Nazir phenomenon to take roots in Kerala for the simple reason that Malayalis as a race are not starstruck. If a star is spotted on the streets, there is no mobbing, no cheering, not even a milling crowd. This is characteristic of the Malayali's innate irreverence to stars and the truly democratic attitude that everybody is equal. In fact, when Ramu Kairat, the director of the award-winning film, Chemeen, contested the election in the Sixties, he lost. Nazir and actress Sheela, who accompanied Kairat on his campaign tour, were booed and not allowed to speak. The biggest advantage that MGR, NTR or Raj Kumar have is their filmi past which has won them a place in the hearts of the people. In Nazir's case this could be his single biggest handicap.

Both MGR and NTR were moulded into roles specifically tailored to project an image. MGR was the swash-

buckling hero, just and kind. For three decades NTR was consistently either divine or heroic. And viewers were gradually lulled and brainwashed into believing that the matinee idols were the living personifications of all the virtues that they portrayed on the screen. Nazir; on the other hand, has acted in a wide variety of roles: from a sentimental lover to a congenital idiot.

Almost everybody admits that if Nazir were to contest from Cheriyankil, he would win. What everybody is sceptical about is his ability to form a party that will, on its own, win an absolute majority in the Assembly. This will primarily be because of the rampant and deeprooted communalism that has been maintaining its vice-like grip over Kerala politics. Small communal parties have their votebanks among the different communities. The Christians, for example, of the Kottayam, Trichur or Ernakulam belts will vote only for the Kerala Congress, the Muslims of Malapuram and Kasargode will vote for the Muslim League while the Nairs and the Ezhavas will cast their votes for their own political parties. The question that can then be asked is: Will the Muslims vote for Nazir? Seasoned politicians are of the opinion that even among the Muslims, Shahib Thangal or M.K. Haji would be preferred to Nazir.

Yet another factor that makes Prem Nazir's entry into politics difficult is that he does not have any organisational setup at the grass-roots level. This was true of NTR but he had an advantage: his fan clubs. The youth of Kerala consider it an insult to

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Prem Nazir with his family

their intelligence if they were to group themselves into fan clubs. Nazir himself concedes that he did not have many fan clubs.

Again, unlike other film stars, those in Kerala are not paid astronomical rates. Prem Nazir, though number one of the Malayalam screen, at the zenith of his career, commands only Rs 1.5 lakhs. His counterparts elsewhere are paid ten times that amount. But like NTR who elicited the support of his rich kamma community, Prem Nazir can also look forward to such support from fellow Muslims who form a sizable chunk of the rich business community. Moreover, he can also get the support from the film industry, as many are deeply indebted to him. Yet another source of support would be the Malayalis, now working in the Gulf. Nazir, in fact, is one of the managing directors of the Calicutbased Rs 16-crore project Carbon and Chemicals Ltd. started with investments from Gulf Malayalis.

Tf Nazir were to form a party and Lstand for elections immediately he would be hounded out in shame. He himself is aware of the adverse (from his point of view) conditions that prevail in Kerala, all of which makes it much more difficult for him than it was for NTR. As he told this correspondent, "I am going very slowly because I know my state is entirely different". The most difficult task that he will have to contend with is the all-pervading air of scepticism, that he does not have the intelligence, capability and experience to run the government. Aware of this, he has decided to proceed cautiously. For the next six or seven months he intends to devote his time to mingling with the people "to gauge their reactions."

If one were to glance through the daily engagements column of the local newspapers of Kerala, one would find Nazir attending one or two functions every day.

He is slowly acquiring the qualities of a politician. He has one advantage; he is an excellent speaker with a good command of Malayalam. His vocabulary is good, his choice of phrases apt. As he says repeatedly in the interview: "I am practical. If the people reject me I'll leave."

Prem Nazir's fate at the hustings depends on two main factors: his ability to project himself in the next two years and the performance of the UDF during this time. There is political frustration and disillusionment in Kerala but it has not yet come to a head. It could, however, in two years' time. But if CM Karunakaran is able to survive along with his coalition government till '85, implement some of the promised schemes, ensure political stability, Prem Nazir would find it difficult to manage a footing. But if the UDF coalition fails, then the voter is once again at the crossroads in 1985, and it will be then that Nazir can try to succeed as a politician.

Nazir can succeed if he effectively capitalises on the disillusionment and uncertainty of the voters. Like NTR, he has to raise several issues to be identified with a new movement. one that serves to highlight the failures and inadequacy of coalition government. The main issue that he will have to raise is one-party rule that would ensure stability, the implementation of time-bound programmes and effective administration as bureaucrats would not be pulled about in different directions. The other issues that he will have to raise will be removal of corruption from every strata of society, unemploy-ment and capitation fees. As he himself admits, a "Nazir wave" has to be generated, and unless there is a wave the filmstar cannot hope to sway the masses.

Should Nazir emerge as a force to contend with, the party that stands to lose the most will be the Congress(I). All the other parties have their committed voters. If the political spectrum is to be divided into percentages of committed voters, the CPI(M) would have 25 per cent, the two Muslim Leagues ten per cent, the NDP and the SRP one per cent each. The Congress(I) accounts for about 20 to 25 per cent of the votes. Apart from taking away votes from the Congress(I), Prem Nazir can also try to secure 20 per cent floating votes.

Just as NTR denied having been inspired by MGR, Nazir denies that NTR is the fount of his inspiration. But his denial is shallow. According to a few friends of Nazir, he is being provoked into joining politics following NTR's success. Nazir, of course, does not agree.

This correspondent spoke to sections of the public, bureaucrats and politicians to gauge their reaction to Nazir's decision. Most discounted the possibility of Prem Nazir emerging as a political force "because Kerala is not like Andhra Pradesh." But it, was clear that NTR's victory and subsequent performance have watered down their vehemence. They still feel that such a phenomenon cannot take place in Kerala but already a modicum of uncertainty has crept in. As C.H. Mohammed Koya, deputy CM of Kerala, said in an exclusive interview with this correspondent: "In a mood of desperation the people may opt for this Third Force"

Mr Koya's reaction was classic for later on in the same interview, he said, "One more vegetable adds to the taste. Let Nazir come. It will add to the fun." Said Koya. "We can't have a birth control of political parties here." Kerala could certainly accommodate one more party. Though he wished Nazir well because "he is an honest man who has a genuine concern for the people," Mr Koya, however, felt that Nazir's chances were not bright because "he doesn't have a political background." He ruled out the possibility of Nazir joining his IUML (Indian Union Muslim League) saying, "Prem Nazir wants a Third Force. We are not interested in a Third Force." He discounted the possibil-ity of Nazir eroding the IUML's support saying, "In our community, cinema is not very popular." Asserting that the erosion would be in the democratic side he said the UDF could be saved if its regime was characterised by dynamic programmes, proper leadership, frequent consultations between coalition partners, implementation of job-oriented schemes and developmental programmes that will evoke a sense of participation in the people and welfare measures. For this, he pointed out,"The centre will have to come to

our rescue. They must give us some money. After all, this is their only bastion in the south". Claiming that coalition politics was here to stay, he added mischievously, "Acutha Menon knows how to run a coalition and E.M.S. Namboodiripad knows how to wreck it." Asked what his reaction would be if Nazir succeeded in cutting through all barriers to emerge as the CM of Kerala, Mr Koya said, "Well then Lohia said of Mrs Gandhi-at least we can see a beautiful face daily in the newspapers." If Nazir did come to power Koya predicts, his party too will be doomed to the affliction that affects all political parties of Kerala. According to him, Nazir will have to combat factionalism, corruption and recalcitrant officers of the secretariat. But Koya could not resist adding: "We have been hearing the background music for so long. But the hero is yet to appear.".

Vyalar Ravi, the home minister (Kerala Congress-Mani group) feels

Nazir with Jaya Bharati



that the communal complexion of Kerala politics will make it very difficult for Nazir to gain a foothold. He refused to impute any significance to the fact that Nazir attracted large crowds. Said he: "In Kerala: there is no scarcity of people to hear your speeches." Though he ruled out the possibility of Nazir establishing a one-party rule in Kerala he, however, felt that Nazir may succeed in having enough number of MLAs to tilt the balance in any coalition setup. The CPI and CPI(M) party members felt that Nazir did not merit serious mention. Mr N.E. Balaram, CPI state secretary told SUNDAY. "Let Prem Nazir join," but refused to comment beyond that. Mr N.A.Mammu Haji, an MLA belonging to the AIML (All India Muslim League), felt that Nazir would not erode his party ranks as the party leaders had a firm foothold in the community. Moreover, he endorsed Koya's belief that Muslims were not enamoured by filmstars. After talking to a number of politicians it was clear that Kerala politicians are not affected by the rough and tumble of politics to take these so-called threats from Nazir seriously. For us, said one politician: "It is all in the game."

What makes it so difficult for Prem Nazir according to a senior bureaucrat, is that "since 1960 no single party or movement has been able to capture the people's fancy. After 23 years of coalition politics it is difficult to believe that the people would do a complete about-turn and go back to a one-party rule." The filmworld is, however, backing Nazir to the hilt. Said filmstar Madhu (second only to Prem Nazir), "People are so fed up with the existing parties. They have seen that there is nothing to choose between the Marxists and the democrats. So, they are bound to give Nazir a chance." Speaking about the advantages that Nazir had, Madhu said: "First and foremost Nazir enjoys a good reputation within and outside the film world. Secondly, he is very hardworking and to 18-hour schedules and thirdly, Nazir is more in touch with the public than most of our politicians." He also strongly felt that Nazir should not join an existing party as "he will have to reform the existing party before he can do any good."
Nazir has an uphill task before

Nazir has an uphill task before him. The success of his attempt depends purely on how well he projects himself as a viable alternative to the UDF and the LDF. One cannot or should not dismiss him cursorily for the simple reason that anything is possible in Indian politics. Nazir himself is hopeful. Said he: "Kerala has proved to be an excellent laboratory for political experiments." He asks pertinently "In which other place are communists voted in and out of power through the ballot? In which other state has there been such a rapid turnover of governments?"

23

"If I declare a war, I will win"

Prem Nazir tells Sunday

Prem Nazir's modest-sized drawing room is crammed with memorabilia. The wall-to-wall shelves are cluttered with mementoes of an illustrious film career that is pushing ahead into its 32nd year: there are trophies, awards, plaques, ivory tusks, wooden elephants, horses, chariots and cannons. Even from outside, the house has a touch of filmland to it; there is an Ambassador, a Mazda and a Mercedes parked in haphazard abandon. This interview was held in two sessions. The first, with ANITA PRATAP, was fixed for eight am at his residence. On the dot, Prem Nazir came in, his gait marked by a jaunty swing. He looked very fit for his 54 years and remarkably agile and

light on his feet. Dressed in a navy blue safari suit. Nazir, however, looked older than he does in his films. Yet his face is without creases and looks fresh. He talked in his study, for as he explained, "Too many people will come and disturb us in the drawing room." The study too was crammed with furniture. On the table was a mound of unopened fan mail which took some time to clear. Throughout the interview, Prem Nazir was relaxed and cheerful. As is clear from the interview, it is not for nothing that the star has earned the reputation of being a "born diplomat." Later, in between takes of his latest movie, he talked to BINOO JOHN. Excerpts:

When did the idea of joining politics first strike you? A: When I was studying in high school. I used to work for the Congress in those days. We were working against Sir C.P. Ramaswamy lyer; that's during the independence movement. Till SSLC, I continued doing that. In those days one Mr Jose was the student Congress leader. But after SSLC, I joined college. My parents were very afraid that if I continued like that I would stop my studies and I would be totally immersed in politics. So they packed me off to SB College in Changanacherry—that's a very disciplined college, you know, After my intermediate examinations I took part in an acting competition and got the first prize. Some producers offered me roles and I entered films. Since then, I have been working in films continuously for 32 years. It is time to quit and now I want a change. Till now I have served my people as an artiste-so that involvement has always been there. I want to continue with that involvement in another form. So, I have selected politics since it is the most suitable way.

Q: Apparently you had made your decision to join politics about seven

years ago...

A: About ten years ago when I was asked what my programme would be after leaving the film industry I had said that I would join politics. I want to serve my people.

Q: What was the reason for waiting

for so long?

A: My busy schedule. Even now I am busy. Some producers still ask me why I should turn to politics. They tell me, "You have been recognised as a good artiste. We are very anxious to get character performances from you." They feel I should join politics only after another five or six years. After all, all these gentlemen who have become chief

ministers (MGR and NTR) started only after 60 years of age. I am only 54. So they (the producers) ask me why I am in such a hurry. But I am not in a hurry. I am slowly planning and building it up. I can't bring in a cheap party. The party I form should do some good for the people. Otherwise why should I enter politics. I am now feeling the pulse of the people. I am entering politics to do good for the public. If the public do not reciprocate, I can have no reason to join politics. I am very practical. A debate is going on now in Kerala about my decision to join politics. In fact, gallup polls are going on everywhere in Kerala. All the papers have asked for the peoples' opinion about my joining politics. I believe in democratic principles so I am trying to gauge the peoples' reaction.



A strong regional party and a strong state government will not in any way harm the federal structure. We have unity in diversity...like flowers of different colours in the same garden.

Q: It was reported earlier that you would be joining the Congress(I). It now appears that you are forming your own party. What has caused this

change of heart?

A: There was a lot of speculation because I have so many friends and relatives in the Congress(I). But then I also have friends in so many parties. The leaders and members of these parties like me...some of them are my bosom friends. When I got the Padma Bhushan it was said that it was politically motivated. It is not politically motivated. I toiled for 32 years, and so they had to consider my name. People are against me joining an existing party. They tell me, "Don't join anybody, don't do that."

Q: Why shouldn't you join an ex-

isting party?

A: Because all the existing parties have lost their credibility. When that is the case why should I join them. I must start organising my own party with its own views and ideas, a regional party like in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. That is better. Though I am thinking of starting my own party, I have not yet decided in which form it should come. It's not easy, I know that. Starting a party is a Herculean task. The vested interests will come, (the) opportunists will come. I will have to be very careful. Acting before a camera is easy if you are a talented

I am slowly building it up. I know i must select a very good team. It will take six or seven months...nothing will happen immediately. It will at least take more than a year. I am actually thinking in terms of two years—people tell me that I am keeping an eye on the 1985 elections (laughs), maybe—but people say I should reduce the time and launch my party in a few months time. But I have commitments—I have signed about 25 to 30 films and these I have to complete first.

Q: What makes you feel that the

people of Kerala may look upon you as an alternative to the present

leaders?

A: The general atmosphere is com pletely corrupt. It is ruined now Corruption has become rampant here. People want a change in Kerala. I don't want to start a national party. My party will only be in Kerala. I want to do something for the Malayali people as in Andhra and Tamil Nadu. The people want a change because they are fed up with the present politicians. People in all walks of life are fed up-doctors, engineers, students, government servants, IAS and IPS officers are all fed up.

Q: Fed up with what? A: With political interference. Politicians interfere too much with the general administration. I feel you should give the IAS, IPS officers and the NGO's (non-gazetted officers) freedom. You can intervene when and if the time and the situation warrants it. What is happening now is unnecessary interference and there is too much of it.

Q: You want to start a party for the Malayalis. But, will not the proliferation of regional parties be detrimental to national unity?

A: First of all the states should be strengthened. We are not declaring a war against the centre, but we have to bargain with them. We must get our due financial assistance. If we want to industrialise our state we must get the necessary funds from the centre. If the states are weak, they are not going to get anything. You know, Kerala's monthly rice requirement is 1.35 lakh tonnes. Our position was very bad-even now it is very bad-because of the drought. The central minister said he would give 15,000 tonnes of rice from Haryana. When he was told that we require more, he did not listen. He just took his file and left. No discussion, nothing. Why did he do that? It is because the state is not strong. It is because the state cannot demand. The state has failed. We had asked for Rs 135 crores for developmental programmes. They (the centre) did not give us anything. NTR had asked for Rs 350 crores and he got part of it. We got zero. Why is that so? It is because we are weak. The government here is a coalition government. They are not united. So, you have to make it strong. It does not matter which party is ruling but I strongly feel that one-party rule should come in Kerala. I will try for that. I know it is difficult, especially in Kerala. But one can try. You educate the people, tell them that they must unite and that Keralites should come together and that they must fight for their cause. But that does not mean we are declaring a war against anybody.

Q: Don't you think that in the long run, regional parties will be a threat to the federal structure?

. A: The danger is only if the centre becomes weak. A strong regional



All these gentlemen who have become chief ministers (MGR and NTR) started (in politics) only after 60 years of age. I am only 54.

party and a strong state government will not in any way harm the federal structure. We have unity in diversity. Like flowers of different colours in the same garden.

Q: What makes you think that the so-called disgruntled masses will line

up behind you?

A: It is not me as a filmstar (that they will follow). It won't be me alone that will be riding the wave. It will be a collective force. The Third Force will rise above narrow beliefs. The country's interests will be uppermost in our minds. Remember our state has always been prepared for political experiments. Didn't we elect the first-ever communist ministry in the world? Moreover I am everybody's man. Didn't all of you nurture me during my 32 years in films?

O: Will your party or the Third Force, be basically anti-centre?

A: Of course not. A state has every legitimate right to claim things from the centre. Can't a child ask his father to send him to school?

Q: Have you made a definite effort to cultivate a secular image? Some time ago, amidst protest from Muslims who even threatened to behead you, you donated an elephant to the Cheriyankil temple.

A: I had always had a secular stand. Religion is a personal affair. Mankind is my religion. Your pain is

'Q: You are banking on the younger generation for support. Do you think the literate youth of Kerala will support an old filmstar?

A: But they are the ones who supported me for these 32 years in

films. They form the bulk of my audience.

Q: Tactically, what do you have in mind for the immediate future?

A: I want to get to know the people, to hear their voice. Their voice, their cries will merge with mine and flow like a stream, growing as it moves, into a flood.

Q: What will be your ultimate aim? A: To build up a system based on human values. That will be possible only by artistes like me. Only an artiste knows the mind and heart of the people. That is going to be my struggle. Tomorrow many of us might not be here and who then will take care of the younger generation? It is like a family. What happens to the kids if the parents start fighting Somebody has to put a stop to it? Q: What do you think of Mrs Gandhi?

A: I like her. I respect her. My admiration for her is deep-rooted. I admire her as a great leader. But

that is a different matter.

: What will be the ideology, the credo of your party?

A: You must respect the feelings of others. Here (in Kerala) people are bloodthirsty. Opposition parties are anxious to suck the ruling party's blood and vice versa. It is a regular dogfight. We don't want that.

Q: To what extent has your decision to enter politics been hastened

by NTR's success?

A: (Laughs). It is not inspiration or anything like that. I am going very slowly...slow and steady. I am not in a hurry to start a party immediately. NTR plunged into politics suddenly and won. I am going very slowly because I know my state's characteristics. My state is entirely different (from the rest).

Q: In what ways do you think

Kerala is different?

A: There is too much communalism here. Muslims, Christians, Nairs, Ezhavas, harijans have their own parties. They are all involved in politics. That is bad. Some sections of the people are controlled by religious organisations. One has to be very careful. You have to educate the people. If this trend (of forming) parties) continues, there is bound to be a mass upsurge.

Q: What was your reaction to

NTR's success?

A: In the beginning we were afraid and wondered how he could win. We never expected such a victory. People say, how can film artistes rule a state? And, that they are not intelligent enough to hold the reins of administration. I don't agree with

Q: How would you rate NTR's performance as chief minister?

A: NTR has brought in some good reforms. I think his performance is good. What I appreciate first was his abolition of capitation fees. Capitation fees have gone upto Rs three lakhs now and students with merit are not able to get admission for

MBBS and MD courses. I appreciate NTR's reduction of corporations from 49 to 19. With the abolition of the pension schemes for ex-Legislators, NTR has cut down on wastage. That's good. I feel the criticism regarding the reduction of the retirement age is politically motivated. But the move was sudden. He could have given them a little notice. NTR is a strict administrator, a very sincere and disciplined man. As an actor he was very disciplined. Even now he is disciplined.

Q: Are you a strict disciplinarian? A: I want to be strict but I also feel that a policy of give-and-take should be there. Our credo is to respect the feelings of others. A certain amount of diplomacy should be there. I can't be very rough and rude. But if I want to be strict, I can. Then the smiling

face will vanish.

Q: What do you intend to achieve

by forming your party?

A: The first thing is to ensure that the corruption which now exists at all levels is rooted out. At present stringent measures are not being introduced to curb corruption. If we come, we will wipe out corruption, though I know it will take time. The price rise has been meteoric. They (the government) are blaming the merchants. But the government is giving them the opportunity to do it. Then why should you blame them? Also, I will ask intellectuals to come forward and speak out their mind frankly. All intellectuals should unite. Intellectuals here are very indifferent and negligent. I could also like to end the curse of capitation fees. And I would like to usher in secularism in Kerala.

Q: Whose interests will your party

represent?

A: Our party will stand for the poor and the down-trodden. The common masses are the worst sufferers now. We should do something for them.

Q: Do you think Kerala politics can accomodate another political party? Don't you think it has already

reached saturation point?

A: That's true. There are too many parties here. But I can't join any of these parties. If I join them, then people will say, "Oh, he just wants to become a minister. He only wants his share of power." But I am not powermad. I agree with you that there are too many parties. If I join any party, we'll get more seats and we can form a government. But I don't want that. If you join a basket of spoilt mangoes, you'll also get spoilt.

Q: Will your party be rightist,

leftist or centrist?

A: I can't say now. Discussions are still going on. But it will be an

independent party.

Q: Unlike most other states, Kerala has a legion of ideologically committed voters. Do you think you stand a chance, in such a context?

A: I think I do. But not immediately. First I have to educate them, tell

I am not in a hurry (to form my party). I am slowly planning and building it up. I can't bring in a cheap party. The party I form should do some good for the people. Otherwise, why should I enter politics? I am entering politics to do good for the public...



them and convince them that if they go on in this way, the state will go to the dogs. I must educate the people on the importance of secularism.

Q: So the first part of your campaign now is to educate the people?

A: Yes. Educating the people. I will tell them that secularism should flourish, that for the sake of their own welfare they should not drag their caste, creed and religion to politics and that we must respect humanity and human values. Now, in Kerala there is a political culture. What is the use of political culture alone? Along with that we should also have humanity. We have an excellent state. There are a lot of natural resources with good, intelligent, hard-working people. But along with all this, human values are important.

Q: It is a well-known fact that Malayalis do not care about filmstars. Filmstars, for instance, are not worshipped as they are in Tamil Nadu or Andhra Pradesh. So, your position is quite different from NTR

and MGR.

A: Worship is not there, I agree. But they like and respect filmstars.

Q: While an MGR and an NTR phenomenon could thrive in their respective states, do you genuinely feel that a Nazir phenomenon is possible in Kerala?

A: I think most of the people like me. That may help me in politics.

Q: But they like you as a filmstar not as a politician.

A: Not only as a filmstar but as a social figure. I have done a lot for them.

Q: Do you think the Keralites will take kindly to the prospect of being

ruled by a filmstar.

A: Why not? Why should they be against filmstars? A labourer, engineer or scientist can rule this country. People from different walks of life can rule, so why not a film artiste? What will matter is the person's merit. If Prem Nazir is good, he will be selected. If he isn't then he will be thrown out.

Q: The average Malayali would not like to mix films with politics because to him politics is serious whereas films are strictly for entertainment. He, therefore, does not credit the film artiste with the requisite intelligence and capability to run a government.

A: In my case it will be different because I am known to them. My life is an open book as is my bank balance. For the last 32 years the people know me—they know me, my successes, merits and demerits, shortcomings and achievements. But as I told you earlier, I am still feeling the pulse of the people.

Q: What has been the initial feed-

back?

A: People want me to join politics—doctors, lawyers, students all want me to join. But I am going about it slowly. Some people tell me this is the right moment while some others advise me to wait.

Q: Have you thought of a name for

your party?

A: Not yet (laughs). Everybody is

anxiously waiting for that.

Q: You had earlier said that you'll join a party that would serve the peoples' cause. Now you've changed your mind and have decided to form your own party. What does this imply? Do you now feel that none of the existing parties are serving the cause of the people?

A: They are serving the people (smiles). But my views and ideas are different. There is no question of my joining them because some of them have already earned bad reputa-

tions.

Q: Could your decision to form your own party stem from ambition?

A: (Laughs). A party of our own has

its own advantages.

Q: How will you set about the task of making the people accept you and your party as a viable alternative? A: You have pinpointed my main obstacle. I think the only way I can overcome this problem is to sincerely mingle with the people for two years so that they understand and appreciate my motives and capabilities. Then they will slowly understand and feel, 'He is not just a film artiste. He is also a politician.' (Making people accept me) will take time. If I jump into the fray now it will be a colossal waste, it will be a colossal failure. I have already started mingling with the people—I attend inaugurations and receptions. They (the

people) suspect me now. They say, He is only a filmstar. How can he come to politics? Politics is difficult. When politicians fail how can he succeed?" So I have to break this cynicism and suspicion. I tell (them) that I am entering politics not for any monetary benefit. I have reached the retiring age. All my personal commitments are over. If I had come to politics 20 years earlier I would not have been sincere like this. Now my problems are over. I should renounce everything. Just like a sabha sangha bharathiya sanyasi, I will come.

Q: You have said that your party represents the Third Force. Can you define what this Third Force is?

A: When two powers clash or strike each other, a new force is created. The Big Bang produced a new entity: the earth. When the two super powers, America, and Russia strike, a new force emerges: the Non-Aligned Movement. In the same way in Kerala, a new force will be created. Necessity is the mother of invention. Q: In other words, the clash between the UDF and the LDF forces in Kerala will produce your Third Force? A: Yes.

O: In the context of Kerala, what are the disadvantages and disadvantages that you will have to face because you are a film artiste.

A: The advantage is that I am known to the people. I don't see any

disadvantages.

Q: I am told that the merchant and business communities intend to sup-

port you.

A: I went to inaugurate one of their functions. They wanted to start a party. They told me they believed in me.

Q: Do you expect support from other sections of society than the ones mentioned?

A: So many sections of people have

offered their support.

Q: But once these people start supporting you, aren't you going to be in a tight corner to the extent that you'll have to bend down to the demands of these lobbies?

A: If they deserve support we shall consider supporting them. Otherwise we won't. I have to be very careful in selecting the people. Screening (for entry in the party) will be scrict. I must admit I am very afraid of these vested interests.

Q: Will there be special emphasis on youth and women?

A: Yes. Even now there is a lot of enthusiasm among the youth. They really want a change. That initial enthusiasm is there. It is exactly like when a film is released there is initial attraction. How long it will last...? for the first few days the collections will be good. But after that it always drops. That should not happen (with my party).

Q: You must have been observing the MGR and NTR phenomenon.

They (the people) will slowly understand and feel, "He is not just a film artiste. He is also a politician." (Making people accept me) will take time. If I jump into the fray now, it will be a colossal waste, a colossal failure.



What are some of their traits that you think is worthy of emulation?

A: They are sincere to the common people, especially the poor and the down-trodden. That is why MGR has introduced the meal scheme. That is a great scheme. He is feeding 67 lakh children daily. It's a great thing he is doing. We can criticise, but such criticisms I feel are purely politically motivated.

Q: But this is the old controversy of whether it is right to give precedence to populist rather than productive schemes.

A: (Smiles). That's a matter of opinion.

Q: What do you have to say about this Rama Rajyam in the south. Is it a pure coincidence or deep down inside do you think there is a divine pattern behind all this?

A: No, no. It is only a coincidence. But why should there be a Rama Rajyam only in the south. It should be there in the whole country.

Q: Do you approve of the Southern CMs' council?

A: Let them meet and discuss. What is wrong in it? But why should you call it "southern." Let it be called just a CMs' meet.

Q: Ideally, what should the relationship between the states and the

centre be?

A: The relationship now is not cordial. There is erosion of power. The states have genuine complaints. They could do with more financial assistance from the centre. The centre should give more concessions to the states, otherwise they (the states) cannot pull on,

Q: Do you see any solution to the Assam or Khalistan problems?

A: That's (the Khalistan problem) a very difficult problem. Because it is religious in nature, you'll have to tackle it very carefully. Our Prime Minister is a very intelligent lady, yet she is also confused about how to solve this problem. Because it is religious, everybody is afraid (to take action). In Kerala too, we have the Nilackla problem. Even now it has not been solved. The situation is still explosive. Everybody is afraid because it is a religious problem.

Q: What are some of the issues that you will raise to mobilise support for

your Third Force?

A: First of all, removal of corruption. You know, the cost of cement is Rs 65 per bag. But it is available in the open market for Rs 125. Why can't they (the government) stop this? What is the meaning of a government, an administration? Other issues will be unemployment and political interference.

Q: How are you going to conquer the communal aspect of Kerala politics? Sections of voters are committed either to the Kerala Congress, the Muslim League or the CPI(M). These voters are not likely to vote

for you.

A: Ah, that we can't say. That is the characteristic of Kerala. Today we elect a person with a majority of 50,000 votes. But in the next election he is defeated by a margin of 10,000 votes. How does this happen? But it happens in Kerala all the time. One minute they (the voters) say, 'Hail Brutus,' and in the next minute they say, 'Down Brutus.'

Q: But do you seriously hope that the Christians, Muslims and leftists committed to their respective par-

ties will vote for you?

A: Everything is so unexpected in politics. When a wave comes they'll vote. That is mass psychology. Our great leaders have been defeated much to our surprise. And again they have won. How is it?

Q: It is said that you'll definitely get elected from Cheriyankil (his native place) but that it is going to be very difficult to form a party with statewide support.

A: You can't say that. After all K. Kamaraj Nadar, though a great leader, was defeated by a young boy. Such things always happen.

Q: Another problem that you will face is regarding financial backing. Cine artistes in Kerala are paid very little compared to their counterparts in Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu. And politics is an expensive proposition.

A: What you say is correct. One has ' to have finances. So we will have to select fine people, work hard and maybe, starve. I am joining politics to serve the people not to acquire pomp and glory.

Q: Suppose you fail as a politician, what will you do? Will you go back to

films?

A: If I declare a war, I will win. Casualties will be there on both sides. I don't think I'll fail.

The Fifth Horseman

RUSSY KARANJIA meets COL. MUAMMAR QADHAFI

Horseman of the Apocalypse? I was surprised to see the popular novel bearing this title by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre freely available in Libya, even though it seeks to blaspheme that country's hero as the Scourge of War, Plague, Hunger and Death in the context of St John the Divine's dire prophecy:

And I looked and beheld a pale horse and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

Qadhafi has confounded his detractors by permitting the distribution of the book in his state, wisely assuming with his people that the Biblical prophecy of destruction by the four feudal Horsemen of the Beast fits no one better than Ronald Reagan and his NATO allies. As he told me with simple conviction, "Any reader of St. John would recognise the Beast of the Apocalypse in the warmongering President of America, the leader of the international imperialist-Zionist conspiracy who, not satisfied with setting scourges like

Israel, El Salvador and Honduras to ravage the earth, now plans to carry war, plague, hunger and death to space itself."

space itself." The leader would not say more, but his people see his "Third Universal Theory", which seeks to restore power in its most direct grassroots form to the peoples of the (a revolutionary solution to which we will return later), as a formula for life against the blasphemy of Death over which Reagan and his allies today preside. To them he is the Fifth Horseman of peace, riding fearlessly across the earth to give battle to the other four scourges of war and its evil brood. And that is precisely why he has emerged as a principal Pentagon target in Washington's hot and cold wars. Anyone with doubts on that score should have a look at disclosures from CIA itself, even in Congressional hearings, about the phenomenal sums of money the US spends on projects to assassinate Qadhafi.

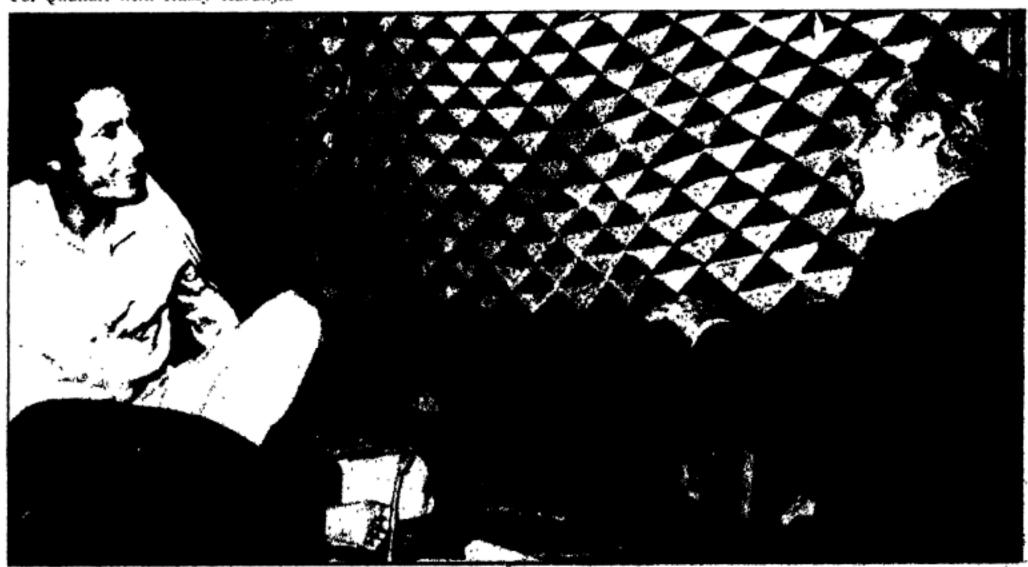
No understanding of the Qadhafi phenomenon is possible, however, without going back a while in history to an incident in London when a young Libyan army officer training in UK watched in pain and anguish

scions of the parasitic Senusi regime of Libya gambling away his people's wealth in gaming casinos. "So this is how they burn our money," murmered the angry officer, and vowed to save his country from this kind of decadence. On returning home, humiliation sharpened his anger at the sight of Muhammad Idris, King of Libya, bowing low to kiss the hands of wives of American oil magnates who were the real, if uncrowned, monarchs of the country, thereby proclaiming to the world his royal slavery.

It was in those days in London and Tripoli that the Jamahiriya took seed in the mind of the young officer and his militant army comrades. Jamahiriya, by the way, is an Arabic neologism made up of two words: republic and masses, and can best be translated as "Peopledom."

So hated and decrepit was the Senusi regime by 1969 that its over-throw by a gallant band of young officers was not only bloodless, but also received with spontaneous street festivities. Thus 1 September 1969, saw the birth of a revolution that was to have a sweeping impact far beyond its borders of a magnitude, seemingly disproportionate to

Col Qadhafi with Russy Karanjia



Libya's limited. size and small population three million. At the eye of this storm stood one man---Muammar Oadhafi.

1 September 1969, marked not the culmination of the 'Jamahiriya, Sweeping measures of transformation—"reform" is a totally inadequate word in this case-were not only conceived, but also executed

only its revolutionary beginning. with breathtaking speed and zeal. Three of the earliest acts of the Jamahiriya revolutionaries were, seen through

the eyes of the West, most unforgiv-

able. These were the expropriation

of British Petroleum's assets, the

expulsion of the exploitative Italian

community, and the closure of the

American Wheelus Air Base. The manner of achievement of these measures was no less heroic than their objectives. Was not a little North African nation telling the world's mightiest and most aggressive military power: "Get off my land and stay out"? To this day, on the basis of bogus "leases" and "agreements" (that are upheld by brute force), the US continues to commit aggression on Cuban soil by illegally retaining the base at Guatenamo. But from Wheelus, they were unceremoniously thrown out amidst wild popular jubiliation.

The expropriation of British Petroleum's assets and the ejection of Esso and its like were the first among major measures leading to the restoration of the nation's wealth to its people. Nowhere in the history of the Jamahiriya can be found those compromises between the departing exploiters and the incoming ones characteristic of so many newly "liberated" colonies. Why? Because what came to power in Libya on 1 September 1969 was not a new regime or government, but the people with their million-muscled power.

Similar uncompromising takeov-ers of other exploitative Western monopolies to the benefit of the Libyan nation made Qadhafi a hero in the eyes of his people, but in the jaundiced mind of the industrialmilitary complex called America, he appeared as the "world's greatest. terrorist." If by this it is meant that he terrorised the world's greatest exploitative machine, then the term is appropriate.

Any assessment of the Libyan rebackground of the sellout of national wealth to foreigners and concentration of what little remained in the

....



Libyans putcnered by the Italian force: days of oppression are over

hands of a few during the monarchical regime. The curse of wages, rents and profits; private appropriation, on the one hand, and social expropriation on the other; the gross inequality between the share of labour as against that of capital; the yawning gap between the majority of the working masses and the parasitic strata of their exploiters: these were the painful memories etched in the minds of Qadhafi and his handful of revolutionaries as they set out to reverse this inegalitarian order.

The restoration of power to the people involved many other radical measures. Foreign and domestic banks were nationalised. The Dinar replaced the Libyan pound as the national currency. Soon after in 1973, Qadhafi launched Libya's Great Cultural Revolution. Its success lay in the fact that unlike its well-intentioned but disastrously implemented prototype in China, it saw no drastic arrests, imprisonments and executions on a massive scale, nor the uprooting of hundreds of thousands and disruption of the nation's social fabric.

Libya's cultural revolution simply ensured ever-increasing popular participation, while liquidating only the harmful remnants and legacies of an exploitative colonial and neocolonial past. Henceforward there were to be no longer the rulers and the ruled, just the Jamahiriya, the Peoples' State. At every conceivable level, peoples' committees were created as the catalysts of the Libyan revolution. At the same time, a major drive towards creating and improving the educational infrastructures at all levels began. The Al Fateh university was founded during this period.

How is the Jamahiriya unique? How does it escape the errors of other systems? Simply because it recognised, at the very outset, one fundamental truth: that the existing instruments of governments, no matter how refined, how democratic or socialist, how representative of the people, were nevertheless exploita-

tive; some openly so, others less apparently so. The ending of the unequal dialogue between those who. rule and those who obey came with the infusion of a new content into democracy—the people's own government, direct and absolute. None "represents" the other as far as national affairs and the exercise of authority are concerned.

As Dr Ahmed Shahati, who heads the World

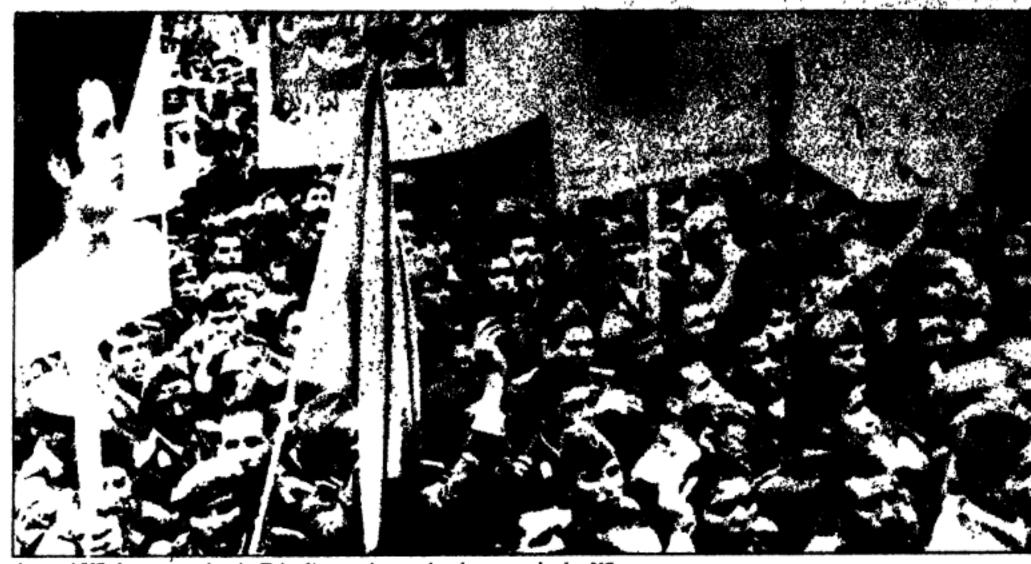
Centre for Study and Research of the Green Books (WCSRGB), succinctly put it, "The patronage of the people abolished all dictatorial ideas which undermine man and transform the citizen into an agent who goes to the polls once every five years to give up his right to sovereignty and become a witness of his own alienation and exploitation."

This is precisely the qualitative break that Qadhafi's method involves, differentiating it so sharply from other philosophies. It does not consider freedom as the expression of aspirations or the freedom to claim rights from others. It refers, above all, to the capacity to do something: when man's effort and production become his own property, when his basic needs are liberated.

Thus the "Third Universal Theory" abolishes all forms of exploitation: free trade, wages, rent, etcetera; and confirms at the same time the equal right of all people to enjoy their country's wealth. Nothing is above or beyond the people (not even their beloved Qadhafi, who has ceased to be their President, or even Leader, and come to be regarded and addressed as "Brother Muammar"). The authority is their authority, wealth is their wealth, and arms are *their* arms.

This drive accelerated after 1977, following a great deal of careful study. With manufacturing, transportation, communications, utilities and banking already fully restored as the property of the people, private importers too began to be dispensed with. Even the services sector was brought under popular control. Lawyers, to cite but one example, no longer have a private, but a public practice.

The logical extension of this radical philosophy and action came in 1978, with the publication of the second part of the Green Book. Most importantly, Qadhafi's urgent and clarion call to the Libyan workers resulted in an unprecedented event: the workers seized control of the



An anti-US demonstration in Tripoli: growing antipathy towards the US

erstwhile private enterprises that they laboured in, totally transforming relations within Libyan society. They took over the factories throughout the country. All enterprises were placed under the control of workers' committees, in a meticulously planned and organised operation resulting in the creation of a genuine workers' democracy in Libyan in-

dustry.

Meanwhile, in further pursuit of a new kind of socialist society, landlordism was dealt a crushing blow, and the accumulation of wealth was prohibited. With exceptions for a landlord's personal dwelling and certain provisions for his family and heirs, all surplus land and properties were turned over to the people. The elimination of "wealth surplus to need" involved other measures as well. With exchange controls, elimination of rented houses, radical transformation of the wage-system (which requires a scientific study and cannot be done justice to in a journalistic survey) and the dismantling of private ownership, there were no outlets left for Libyans with surplus dinars!

How thrilled would the average Bombayite or Calcuttan, struggling for accommodation be, to know that a landlord cannot keep a flat or house untenanted for more than a month! Once this happens, the property is taken over and handed to homeless people under the popular housing improvement drive.

The cornerstone of the Green Book is the indivisibility of its theory from its practice. Every ideal outlined in theory was skilfully translated into practice, into concrete, visible reality. The people rule themselves, the workers run the industry, the masses

govern themselves, they are no longer subject to the tyranny of wageslavery of rent, of capitalism and its myriad drawbacks.

adhafi would be the last person, the repeatedly told me, to claim that the Green Books were a product of his personal ecclectical philosophising and theorising. "The books are a charter of the freedom and liberation of my people, a testament of their revolutionary experience, a document of history as they at once made it and wrote it," he maintains. Qadhafi's is a triple role of philosopher, writer and executor, "together", he always insists, "with the masses of the Libyan people", whom he has put in the vanguard as architects of their fate and masters of their destiny.

According to Qadhafi, capitalism thrives on the existence of inequality. Indeed inequality is its very raison d'etre, since complete social equality is not only unattainable under capitalism but in fact the two are contradictions in terms. Exploitation of one form or another is synonymous with capitalism; and no matter what measures the government of a capitalist country may take to control the "unacceptable face of capitalism", capitalism remains exploitative.

On the other hand, Qadhafi states categorically that "there is no alternative to socialism, but it must be based firmly on the total direct authority of the people." While he would unflinchingly support the socialist countries against the USA, he has major differences with them on the practice of socialism, on socialism as it functions at the popular grassroots level.

In his view, the Socialist countries are in danger of getting enmeshed in the same trap which plagues people under capitalism—that is, the trap of a wage-based economy, or as he calls it, "wage slavery". Hence the Jamahiriya is involved in a novel process-that of doing away with the wage syndrome altogether and substituting a general socialist system where workers are partners and not wage-earners. Qadhafi makes it clear, nevertheless, that this criticism of his is by no means to be construed as a political equation of the socialist camp with its imperialist rival, but simply a means of cleansing socialism of its cobwebs and breaking a unique, third path.

He summed it all up to me: "We are interested that the house in which you live should be your house, owned by you. Your means of transport and communication should be owned by you. Your farm should be owned by you. Your production should be owned by you. The arms should be owned by you, and the regular armies should disappear. You should not be hired by someone else. You should not be a wage-earner at the mercy of the boss. The final authority should be yours and yours alone."

Qadhafi, of course, built the architecture of his ideology on the foundations of his immortal guru, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and his vision of an Arab nation free of the Zionist enclave of Israel together with its western imperialist patrons and paymasters. But to this architecture he provided the absolutely necessary superstructure of invincible people's power to secure its safety from the continuing imperialist-Zionist conspiracy that sabotaged the Egyptian

revolution of July 1952 after Nasser's death or possibly murder. Oadhafi realised that the revolution was scuttled because it failed to liquidate the old colonial institutions, like governments, whether republican or monarchist, parliaments, political parties, etc, which could be bought and sold or corrupted behind the backs of the people once the leader was no more.

This is what happened to Egypt after the death of its Titan. The formerly exploitative strata which had crept back into the bureaucracy, big landlords who had crawled into avenues of potential power, foreign "moles" in the civil and military services—all were able to penetrate the Egyptian revolution and sabotage it from within. The failure to complete the agrarian revolution, the hesitancy in rushing through with radical industrial reform,

As long as Nasser was alive, his giant figure stood between the revolution and its enemies. With his death, a pathetic specimen like Sadat-who must surely have been the worst ruler that country ever had in its several thousand year long history—could seize power and abort the revolution.

proved fatal.

In the case of Qachafi and the Libyan revolution, however, the situation is very different. Carefully planned phases, meticulously observed deadlines, were there at every stage, allowing no chance whatsoever to the erstwhile exploiters to stage a comeback. One might say that Qadhafi began where Nasser left off.

There is another aspect of the "Third Universal Theory" which can shake and probably uproot the existing international order of warring states and nations with national frontiers dividing them to the detriment of anything like "one world" living in peaceful and co-operative coexistence.

Qadhafi concludes from the tragic experiences of Nasser that while all the Arab people, as indeed world humanity, is fundamentally one and indivisible, it is only the eternally warring leadership of kings and presidents and prime ministers that divides nation from nation and fractures humanity into national states with hard, dividing oftentimes warring frontiers.

Once the masses of the people-say, of Libya-become the rulers by successfully operating the "Third Universal Theory" and reaping its harvest, the peoples of Egypt and Sudan and other Arab countries would follow suit to create a united Arab -nation. And with the rest of the world being drawn into such a mutually rewarding experiment, the very concept of nation states would disappear with People's Congress of Qadhafi's vision emerging in state after state to re-unite humanity into the "one world" concept of its dreamers and prophets.

The vision may be a distant, farflung one, but the success of the experiment in its Libyan laboratory will bring it closer by a century, maybe a decade. Qadhafi regards this as "an inevitable process of the natural law."

That makes this little North African nation a thorn in the flesh of the world's mightiest military power, the United States? I would say the Libyan Jamahiriya poses a threat to the USA merely because it exists! Simply by virtue of the radical alternative it presents, by virtue of the new world order it represents so well, Libya poses the biggest headache to the US in northern Africa, which the Pentagon politely refers to as a "zone of vital US interests". And the ache has begun to extend beyond North Africa, and is now sweeping into West Asia as well-why, even Latin America, where it poses a major threat to the US surrogate states.

Hence the need to disrupt the Libyan revolution becomes crucial for the USA. This is no exaggeration. I refer readers to the American magazine Newsweek (an arch-Qadhafi baiter) dated 3 August 1981. The issue clearly brings out the depth of CIA plots against Qadhafi and his people. It states pointblank that the CIA planned the Libyan revolutionary's assassination as part of "a large-scale multiphase and costly scheme to overthrow the Libyan regime.'

This was followed by another story in Newsweek which predicted that the USA would deliberately challenge Libya's territorial waters in a

calculatedly, provocative move. It was just after this, on 19 August, that the dastardly invasion attempt off the Gulf of Sirte, now so notorious, took place.

I recall this fact only to rub home the importance the US attaches to Qadhafi's removal. He stands between them and hegemony of a crucial sphere. Between 1978 and 1982 alone, the CIA has self-admittedly spent over 60 million dollars trying to "terminate" (to use polite agency terminology) Qadhafi. Oddly enough, the more the US tried to "contain" or "terminate" him, the wider spread his influence and clout. And the impetus that the Jamahiriya has released is now sweeping thto the liberation struggles in Chad, inspires the fighting people of the Polisario, stands firm by the Palestinians, threatens the US surrogates of Somalia and the Sudan, and poses a danger to the very survival of the reactionary regimes.

Nor does he stop at his continent or West Asia. When the US launched its recent aggression against the fighting people of revolutionary Nicaragua, the first country to openly declare it would arm the Nicara. guans in the struggle was Qadhafi's Libya. As a matter of fact, Libyan planes were boarded, and some of these shipments seized at Brazilian airports a few days ago, while on their way to Managua.

The shadow of the Fifth Horseman stretches over the US itself. At a recent seminar on the "Third Universal Theory" at Benghazi, I witnessed for the first time a delegation of Red Indians, whose population of 10 million before Columbus swelling to 50 million had been cut down to one million by what their leaders, Ward Churchill and Dace Means, described to me as "the great American genocide". They had come to seek Qadhafi's help to restore their lost land and liberty to them;

> so had the Negroes, Muslims and other minorities suffering American repression.

'As Qadhafi sees it, the quest for peace can never be a genuine one if it means betrayal of the newly free nations and the national liberation struggles. Peace for Qadhafi does not merely mean the absence of war, but the absence of exploitation. The determination never to compromise the interests of the developing world, of the underdogs, of the exploited and the oppressed, and the guts to translate this into actionsuch is the stuff that history is made of. The Fifth Horseman today rides historical forces that may save humanity from the nuclear Apocalypse.

Oadhafi: "Brother Muammar"

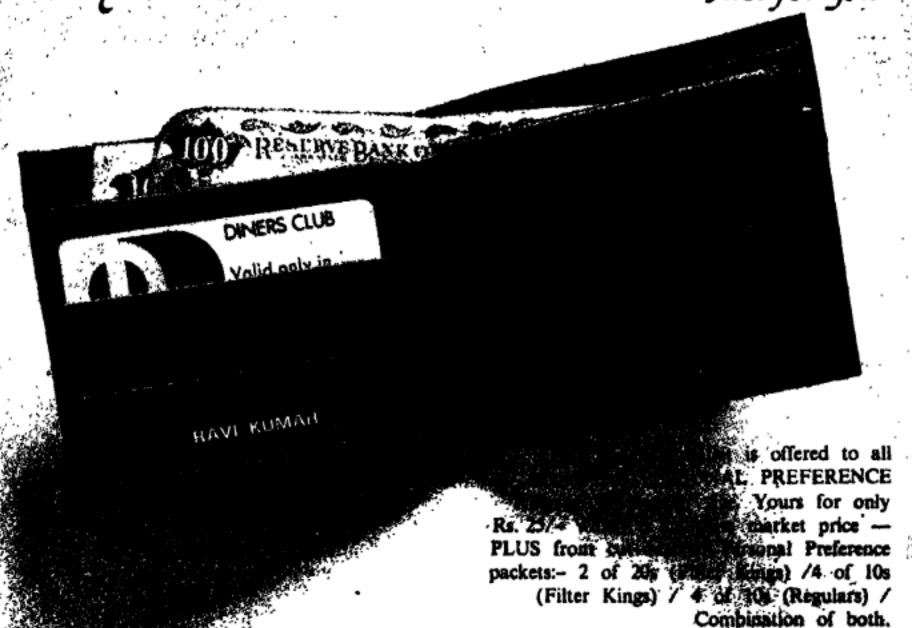


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LIBYA: A CHRONOLOGY

1951: Libya gains "independence" under UN auspices with Muhammad Idris al-Senusi as king.

1953: Libya joins the Arab League...and concludes a 20-year treaty with the United Kingdom, granting the latter military bases in return for an annual subsidy.

1954: Libya "grants" the USA military bases in return for an annual subsidy.

1955: Libya is admitted to the UN; Central Bank of Libya is established.

1959: Esso strikes oil at Zelten.

1967: Anti-Jewish riots break out following the Israeli aggression against the Arabs. Riots begin to threaten local government and

lead to top-level changes.

1969: 1 September. In a swift and bloodless coup, the hated Senusi monarchy is overthrown and a republic is set up by a band of young army officers led by Muammar al Qadhafi. The Revolutionary Common Council is named the Supreme Organ of the State. 1970: USA ejected from Wheelus Air Base; all Italian-owned properties are confiscated; foreign and domestic banks are nationalised and Oadhafi takes over as Premier.

1971: Dinar replaces Libyan pound as official currency; Arab Socialist Union is founded as Libya's sole political organisation. Libya joins Egypt and Syria in forming the Federation of Arab

Republics.

1972: British Petroleum interests nationalised and restored to national wealth. Major Abdul Salam Jalloud takes over as Prime Minister.



1973: Qadhafi launches Libya's cultural revolution. Libya stands firm by Arabs during October war and also plays leading role in oil embargo.

1974-75: CIA-backed coup and destabilisation attempts are shattered. But, as Sadat's compromise with Israelis is already beginning, relations with Egypt begin to plummet.

1977: As Sadat moves closer towards US and Israel, tensions between the two intensify. Meanwhile period of internal socialist

reconstruction begins in a big way.

1978: Break with Egypt complete after Sadat's Camp David betrayal. Libya vows never to cease struggle for Palestinian state

1979: Qadhafi resigns from post of General Secretary of the General Secretariat of the General People's Congress to devote more time to socialist reconstruction and to the revolution. Libyan Embassies abroad are seized on Qadhafi's call and converted into Peoples' Bureaux

1980: Libya renders armed assistance to Chad, but runs into major

opposition.

and liberation.

1981: USA, sick and tired of Qadhafi's seeming indestructibility, launches major operations to finish him. Gulf of Sitre battle rages from 21 August. Libya stands firm and refuses to be cowed down. Newsweek prints full expose of CIA super-plot to "terminate" Oadhafi.

1982: Libya withdraws its troops from Chad, but events vindicate her stand, and she successfully hosts the OAU Summit (19th Summit) in Tripoli, despite massive American efforts to scuttle it. Libya stands firmly by Palestinians once again, during Israeli aggression and annexation of Lebanon. Libya scorns Fez Settlement as sell out.

1983: Libyan Jamahiriya enters 14th year.

- Political struggle that results in the victory of a candidate with 51 per cent of the votes leads to a dictatorial governing body disguised as a false democracy, since 49 per cent of the electorate is ruled by an instrument they did not vote for, but had been imposed upon them. This is dictatorship...In actual fact dictatorship is established under the cover of false democracy.
- Natural law has led to natural socialism based on equality among the economic factors of production and has almost brought about among individuals, consumption equal to nature's production. But the exploitation of man by man and the possession by some individuals of more of the general wealth than they need is a manifest departure from natural law and the beginning of distortion and corruption in the life of the human community.
- A legitimate purpose of the individual's economic activity is solely to satisfy his needs. For the wealth of the world has limits at each stage as does the wealth of each individual society. Therefore, no individual has the right to carry out economic activity in order to acquire more of that wealth than is necessary to satisfy his needs, because the excess amount belongs to other individuals.
- A parliament is a misrepresentation of the people and parliamentary governments are a misleading solution to the problems of democracy. A parliament is originally founded to represent the people, but this in itself, is undemocratic as democracy means the authority of the people and not an authority acting on their behalf. The mere existence of parliament means the absence of the people, but true democracy exists only through the participation of the people, not through the activity of their representatives.
- The outstanding experiments of history have produced a new experiment, a final culmination of man's struggle to attain his freedom and to achieve happiness by satisfying his needs, warding off the exploitation of others, putting an ultimate end to tyranny and finding a means for the just distribution of society's wealth. Under the new experiment you work for yourself to satisfy your needs rather than exploiting others to work for you...

-From the Green Book

'They were all trying to make history'

The opposition conclave at Vijayawada under the leadership of the Andhra Pradesh chief minister, NTR, merely emphasises the fact that opposition unity of any kind is only an exercise in political rhetoric. AJAY KUMAR, who attended the conclave, reports on how the Vijayawada meet, above everything else, successfully catapulted NTR into the frontline of the national opposition leadership.

bout 16 kms from Vijayawada, on the road to Hyderabad, is the Vijayawada Thermal Power station (VTPS). The VTPS is not just another power plant: it is the best thermal power plant in the country. Constructed in a record time of 36 months, it has constantly generated an unusually high percentage of its installed capacity. In 1982, its two units generated an average of 88 per cent of their capacity, the highest in the country. And, yet, the plant is absolutely spick and span. Its chimneys do not spew out smoke and coal dust like most other plants. In fact, visitors to the plant, not seeing any smoke coming out of the chimneys, have even wondered if it was working when it was at full throttle. The VTPS has, not surprisingly, become a tourist attraction.

On Saturday 28 May, the VTPS hit the headlines again, but for an altogether different reason. For on that day, its circular VTPS guest house set atop a 300ft hill behind the plant, was the venue for a conference of opposition leaders, the like of which has not happened since Mrs Gandhi became the common target of all opposition parties. Sitting in one of the rooms, overlooking the dusty plains rolling down to the Krishna river flowing about two kms away, leaders of the 14 opposition parties discussed matters of national importance for eight hours-more than double the planned time.

Expectations of this meeting were very high, even though till the last minute there was no fixed agenda for it. It all started off with an invitation from the Telugu Desam leader Mr N. T. Rama Rao, to grace the first

annual convention of the party at the end of which they would meet to discuss problems of common interest. Everything was delightfully vague and perhaps because of this, unlike in the past when similar meetings of opposition leaders and chief minister have been planned but have not materialised, all 14 parties accepted the invitation. Since Mrs Gandhi returned to power in 1980, there has never been such a conglomeration of opposition forces.

Several other factors lent the meeting a special significance. The next general elections are less than 18 months away—less if the talk about a mid-term poll is to be believed. With Mrs Gandhi to decide when the poll would be, it would be suicidal for the opposition not to be prepared—and they know it.

In their own way, they have been trying to define their parameters. Mr A.B. Vajpayee has pledged the BJP to a national democratic front which would exclude the communist parties. The communist parties have returned the compliments. And yet, at Vijayawada they were going to sit down and talk to each other.

It was thus that speculation started that the Vijayawada meet would be the first step towards creating an electoral alliance for forming a national alternative. The polarisation of political forces which had been inching along, it was widely believed, would be given a qualitative leap at Vijayawada. Such speculation was only confirmed when NTR announced that the meeting would be a "secret conclave." The news made national headlines.

Hence not only was there the largest congregation of opposition leaders, the convention of the Telugu Desam which preceded was willy-nilly covered by the largest contingent of the national press ever attending a meeting of a regional party. Representatives of all the national dailies, a TV crew of UPI which airdashed from Srinagar, were among the contingent of over 100 newsmen present. If history was to

NTR in his hut in Vijayawada: one man show



be made, they wanted to record it. The newsmen would be briefed, they were told, at 1.00 pm. The leaders would commence their discussions at 9.00 pm, conclude by 12.30 pm and then meet the press en masse. Thus, even when one o'clock stretched to two, three, four, five, yet nobody went away. History, after all, was going to be made. Mr Advani and Dr Abdullah, word came, had left but there were still enough leaders left. There was some half-hearted talk of a boycott, but press unity being only slightly more difficult than opposition unity everybody stayed on.

Finally, a little after five, NTR descended from the hill top and without as much as an apology, read out a statement that had been adopted unanimously. The anticlimax that the statement proved to be is, by now, well-known. The disappointment was heightened by the fact that none of the other leaders

chose to meet the press.

As a statement of consensus, the resolutions were significant enough. It made three main points: the failure of the ruling party at the centre to find timely and acceptable solutions to the problems of the people, had created a situation wherein the unity of the country had been threatened as never before in the 35 years since independence; it was most irresponsible for the Prime Minister to proclaim that the country's problems were caused by the very existence of the opposition; distribution of centre-states' powers have to be reviewed, encroachment of the centre into the domain of the states has to stop and the centre must consult the states and opposition parties before announcing the terms of reference of the Sarkaria commission. The statement was worded strongly and it was, by and large, categorical. It said nothing new but its importance lay in the fact that it was being said collectively As Mr Rama Rao said a "new politic- . al brotherhood" was the need of the hour,

There were several other plus points of the meet, the foremost of them, as Mr Jagjivan Ram, the doyen of all those who came, said was that the leaders met at all. More, the leaders decided to meet again and meet regularly. Dr Farooq Abdullah, who sat across the BJP with whom he was fighting in Kashmir, was in a sufficiently anti-Congress(I) mood to offer to host the next meeting. The attempt as Babuji put it, was to find the least common denominator and agree on that. All contentious issues were avoided. Mr H.N. Bahuguna said after the meeting that he felt more than rewarded for having come all the way.

What was anti-climactic was that there was no progress towards creating a national alternative—the main focil of interest about the meeting. In fact, according to the best of

NTR as supreme leader



At the Desam convention: (from I to r, front row) Upendra, NTR and N. Bhaskar Rao

The Telugu Desam is NTR's party and his alone; this was amply clear from the three-day convention of the party which ended on 28 May 1983 at Vijayawada. Travelling as a commoner in a second class three-tier compartment from Madras to Vijayawada, and living in a thatched hut on the convention premises, NTR made it clear to his partymen that there was to be no opposition to his dictated policies. And it was his towering personality that made the difference: for, without him, the Telugu Desam would have gone the same way as most political parties have in the past: broken up with internal dissension and bickerings.

And it was perhaps for this reason that NTR hit out at his partymen from the time he unfurled the party flag at the beginning of the convention. In the speech which he delivered then, NTR told the Desam members that they should not allow the people of the state, who had voted the party to power, to compare the Desam government with past governments. He was referring to the allegations and public statements made by party workers and legislators against their colleagues.

Despite NTR being at the helm of affairs, elections to the executive committee could not be held. It was clear that dissension had not been smothered. The general council of the party found a way out of the tangle by authorising the unanimously elected party president, NTR, to nominate the members to the executive committee. One of

the major causes for dissension was the choice of the general secretary of the party, Mr P. Upendra, a close confidant of NTR. Mr Upendra, like NTR, is a kamma by caste. This naturally gave added strength to the charge that Telugu Desam is a kamma-dominated party. Mr Upendra also faced resentment for being the adviser whom the chief minister trusts completely. According to Desam insiders, the Vijayawada party convention and the opposition conclave were largely organised by Mr Upendra. Naturally, it was for this reason that dissidence in the party was distinctly polarised into two groups: the Upendra faction and the group led by Mr Nadendla Bhaskar Rao, the finance minister and who ranks second in the state cabinet (he was also a minister in the Channa Reddy and the Anjaiah cabinets). Supporters of Mr Bhaskar Rao proposed the name of Bazi Papi Reddy, former Janata legislator. As a compromise, NTR struck a balance between the two groups by nominating Mr Upendra as the general secretary, Papi Reddy and Mrs T. Adilakshmi, a former Congress(I) legislator as vice-presidents, Mr Mahipal Reddy and Mr M. A. Baig as joint secretaries, and Mr Aswapathi as the treasurer of the party

For the present, NTR has curbed dissension within the party by virtue of his personality and his position as the party leader; but will he be able to hold the various factions

together for long?

Shubha Singh

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sources, the issue of a mid-term poll and what the parties would do in the eventuality was not even raised at the meeting. After NTR gave his opening speech, which ran into seven foolscap pages, all the other 13 leaders followed with individual speeches. Dr Abdullah spoke about Kashmir, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala explained the reasons for the Akali morcha, while the others merely reiterated much of what they had said in public. As a disappointed Mrs Maneka Gandhi, who wanted a discussion with a specific focus on the issue of the polls ahead, said afterwards, "Everybody was trying to make history."

NTR's speech was remarkable on two counts. Firstly, his analysis of the national situation showed a welcome clarity of thought-something that has been missing in his interviews and answers at press conferences. Further, for the first time, he referred to issues like the Assam elections and the Punjab tangle. On the former, he stated categorically that the elections should not have been held at all and were an insult to the people; on the latter, he squarely blamed the Congress(I) for dillydallying. For the CPI and the CPI(M), who took part in the Assam elections and were as vociferous about its necessity as the Congress(I), NTR's stand must have come as a surprise. However, it is further proof of all the leaders' desire to stay away from controversies that the two parties chose not to contest the statement.

Yet, it took the leaders eight hours to agree on a statement of less than 500 words. One reason why this happened was the time spent on deciding whether the policies of the Congress(I) were to be termed "antinational" or "anti-people." Eventually, the latter was chosen but only after 45 minutes had been spent

bickering over it.

Hair-splitting apart, there were other reasons why the meeting was fated to be a disappointment. In calling the meeting, NTR's motives were not clear enough. The sceptics say that the idea behnd the meeting was only to project the image of NTR on the national level. Mr Vajpayee has even said as much. By persuading the leaders to come to the meet, NTR has certainly gained in national prestige. If NTR realised this, he gave no indication. Asked why he had called the meeting he said he saw it as a followup of the April meeting of southern chief ministers. His party apparently saw it still differently. In one of the 21 resolutions passed at the convention, it said that it believed there should be a confederation of regional parties which have a clear socio-economic programme. This raised hopes that perhaps an attempt would be made towards this entirely fresh objective.

The more important reason, however, for the inevitability of the

meeting ending in a damp squib was the reality of the parties. While they all claim to be in opposition to the Congress(I), they are more in opposition to each other. Consider, for instance, the legacy with which they came to the meeting.

roadly speaking, the 14 parties Dcan be put into four categories. In the first category is the AIADMK. Its leader, Mr M.G. Ramachandran is said to be mortally scared that the centre could at any time restart his income-tax cases. A day before the Vijayawada conclave, MGR declared in Madras that he saw no possibility of a national alternative to the Congress(I). It is clear that the Congress(I) is wooing MGR for an alliance at the next elections. This statement of MGR should be evidence enough that he is not too unwilling but there

is even more proof.

At the function to mark the signing of the Telugu Ganga project, held at Madras on 25 May, which was attended by Mrs Gandhi, NTR had made an impassioned speech in which he lamented that even after 35 years of independence there was so much poverty and deprivation. Mrs Gandhi, who sees nothing but prosperity in the country, was visibly squirming throughout the speech. When NTR finished MGR said: "My thambi (younger brother) has just made an emotional speech but what he forgot to say was that all the things he said had not been done are actually being done under the 20point programme." The day is not far off when the thambi and anna (elder brother—NTR's name for MGR), will part ways unless NTR changes

In the second category are the Lok Dal, Congress(J), Congress(S) and the National Conference. At various times, they breathe hot and cold against the Congress(I). Choudhary Charan Singh pleaded ill-health for his inability to attend the meeting but was making news in Delhi as he met Mrs Gandhi to urge her to take a stronger stand against the Akali Dal. Babuji continues to be dogged by rumours that he would be joining the Congress(I). He denied the latest such rumour only the day beforee the meeting. The president of the Congress(S), Sharad Pawar, has still to convince people that he will not follow his mentor, Mr Y.B. Chavan, into the Congress(I). And as for Dr Abdullah, it is not even six months since he was referring to how much Mrs Gandhi's family mattered to him.

In the third category are the communist parties. They have no complaints about Mrs Gandhi's foreign policy and though they claim to be opposed to her national policy, they did support her on the Assam election issue. Their support/opposition to Mrs Gandhi on an issue can only confound other parties.

In the fourth category are those

currently clearly in opposition to the Congress(I). Among these the most vitriolic are the two parties which are the latest to leave the Congress(I) womb—Rashtriya Sanjay Manch and the Rashtriya Congress, They have personal scores to settle and they are impatient. For the Telugu Desam and Akalis, the stakes are their states of influence. For the Janata and BJP, they would like to believe their stakes are larger. They cannot see themselves as junior partners in any alliance or coalition. And finally there is Mr H.N. Bahuguna who is a case apart. Suffice it to say that Mrs Gandhi fears him the most and hates him the most.

Nobody should, therefore, underestimate the significance of such a collection of leaders getting together. The centre certainly did not underestimate the importance. According to a reliable source as many as 15 Intelligence Bureau (IB) officials were in Vijayawada on that crucial day. It is altogether another matter that Mrs Maneka Gandhi hit the nail on the head when she is reported to have said that she saw no prospect of the opposition ever un-

iting.

The Opposition is conscious, in varying degrees, of the dangers of uniting merely because they oppose the Congress(I). They need to agree to a common minimum programme if they are to present an alternative that will be different from the SVD governments in the Sixtles and the

Janata disaster.

The new ractor in the renewed attempts at opposition unity is the presence of NTR. He has charisma, he commands an unbelievable popularity in his state, he is no fool at politics even though he has been in politics for barely 14 months, and he is ambitious. His reputation for integrity is, as yet, largely unsullied. By emerging as the champion spokesman of the necessity for a review of centre-state relations, he has shown that his interests are not limited to his state. By voicing his concern for the poor, by asking questions like how the Rohini helps provide a meal to the starving millions, he is echoing what the people feel.

Unlike other opposition leaders, he is uncontroversial. Like them, he is totally against the Congress(I). They are delighted that a man who could well decide the fate of 42 Lok Sabha seats is on a path of confrontation against the Congress(I). He could well see himself as the fulcrum on which opposition unity has to rest: the Vijayawada meet has established that power in Andhra Pradesh is not the limit of his horizon. Indians have always had respect for philosopher-saints in power: NTR thinks he is one such.

Mr Vajpayee has said that the next prime minister of the country should come from the south. What is to stop NTR from thinking he is the man the nation was waiting for?

37

What caused the Assam massacres?

Politics, not communalism or the foreign hand, says ARUN SHOURIE



The politics of our rulers, their callous pursuit of narrow ends, their singular pursuit of them—dividing the people and sowing fear and hatred in them—and their perverse preoccupations are what led to the massacres. A series of intelligence reports had warned the authorities of impending violence but nobody paid any head to them. In the case of Nellie, the officer-in-charge of the Nowgong police station, Zahlruddin, sent a wireless message on 15 February reporting that 1,000 Assamese armed with deadly weapons had gathered around Nellie. He sought help from the commandant of the 5th battalion of the Assam Police, who was stationed just ten km away with almost 1,000 armed police and CRPF personnel under his command. No help came. The result: 1,383 men, women and children were butchered on 18 February. This exclusive report presents further evidence on Nellie and reconstructs the violence that raxed Gohpur in Darrang district. Citing wireless and telex messages and notes from the files of the Assam government, the report shows how the government was fiddling while Assam was burning. The records not only testify to the callousness of the government but also to how perverse our rulers are.

Photographs by ALOKE MITRA

he foreign hand. That insinuation was the government's first attempt to explain away the killings in Assam. It did not work. Since then the rulers and their apologists have been peddling the other bogey: the Hindu communalists.

It is best in these matters to first let the rulers put their alibis out in full. The citizens can then contrast these with the facts and thereby get to know their rulers better. As the rulers have finally settled on the 'Hindu communalists' alibi, now is the time to record some facts about the killings. Notice first three facts

about Nellie itself:

 First, in and around Nellie the Lalung tribals killed Bengali Muslims as well as Bengali Hindus indiscriminately. Even the most ardent of police informers have not detected or even so much as alleged that the RSS, etc, have acquired any influ-

ence among the Lalungs.

 Second, the police have information that while the massacre occurred on 18 February and while Zahiruddin the officer in charge of Nowgong police station, sent his frantic message on 15 February, the trouble had actually started on 12 February—a full six days before the massacre. Villagers in and around Nellie had killed six Lalung children and had kidnapped four young Lalung women. It was to avenge the killings and to recover the girls that the Lalung tribals had gathered on the night of 14 February, and it was to this gathering that Zahiruddin had referred in his message. The villagers responsible for kidnapping the young women have since been identified and arrested by the police. They have turned out to be immigrant Muslims.

 Third, Zahiruddin's message was sent, among others, to the commandant of the 5th battalion of the Assam Police, who was camping at Marigaon, just ten km from Nellie, with an entire battalion of Assam Police as well as a unit of the CRPF under his command. The commandant's name is M. N. A. Kabir. He. joined the Assam Police in August 1963. He is a second-generation immigrant from what is now Bangladesh. And it so happens that he is Muslim. Why did he not act? Is it that some communalists, some foreign intelligence agency, perhaps intercepted the message and pre-vented it from reaching him? Or, even more plausibly, is it that though a Muslim, he too was under the influence of some Hindu communalists? Or, was it, that he too was senselessly nailed down to 'election 'duty'?

Even the most cursory look at the pattern of violence shows how much of an oversimplification it is to attribute the killings to communalism. In Nellie, Lalung tribals killed Bengali Muslims and Hindus; in Kokrajhar subdivision, Boro Kacharis on the



A mother and a child lie in deathly embrace at Nellie : help came too late



Decomposed bodies lie scattered in the fields of Nellie : horror beyond belief

one side and Bengali Hindus and Muslims on the other killed each other; in Goreswar and Khairabari, Saranias and Boro Kacharis killed and were killed by Bengali Hindus; in Gohpur, Boros killed and were killed by Assamese Hindus; in Dhemaji and Janai, Mising tribals killed and were killed by Bengali Hindus and Muslims fighting together; in Samaguri, Muslims killed Hindus as they did in Dhaila and Thekrabari; in Chaalkhowa Chapori, Assamese Hindus and Muslims fighting together killed Bengali Muslims.

But it is not just an oversimplification to lay all the blame for this on communalism—a convenient oversimplification for some, an oversimplification born out of laziness for others. It is a dangerous oversimplification. And that, for at least two reasons:

• First, by beating the communalism drum even when the facts are otherwise, we feed the stereotypes, the prejudices that each community has about the other; we reinforce the notion in the mind of each community that the other is out to get it. In a very real sense thus, these oversimplifications incite hatred among communities and reinforce the very tendencies, that I take it, all of us want to alleviate.

Second, by adopting such a facile explanation, an explanation that has now become a mental cliche, we obscure the other—and, it so happens in the case of Assam, the truly important—the causes which we cannot neglect but at our peril. In particular, by adopting this cliche of an explanation we obscure the role of the state apparatus in fomenting divisions among our people, by its negligence of course, but, as I shall show in a moment, by much worse also.

There is not enough space to document the facts for each of the massacres and, in a sense, it is unnecessary to do so: the pattern is the same in all the cases. I shall, therefore, lead you through just one of the instances that, along with Nellie, has been much in the public eye: the killings and arson in the Gohpur area between 12 and 14 February 1983. I select this only in part because it has been in the public eye. As you will notice at the end of my narration on Gohpur, Mrs Gandhi has once again taken the precise step that is bound to exacerbate tensions in this very area, to do so in precisely the manner in which they rose earlier and the consequences will precisely be

As in the case of Nellie, there is some virtue in relying exclusively on the records and findings of the police itself: nothing shuts official propagandists up as do police documents! And in this case I shall use the findings not of the police in general but those of the special branch, the part of the police that deals with domestic intelligence.

There are two reasons for this. First, the special branch is the one that has been officially reconstructing the incidents most systematically. And, second, because, as every pressman who has been covering Assam knows, it is this very special branch that has done the most to push communalism as the explanation for everything: partly because its senior officials know that this is what everyone will swallow without a second thought and partly because this has been their way of ingratiating themselves with the rulers.

GOHPUR

Detween 12 and 14 February, Boro BKacharis and Assamese killed each other and destroyed each other's houses with demonic tury in a 150 square km area in Darrang district. By the end, 43 Assamese villages and 30 Boro Kachari villages had been burnt to the ground. At least 30 had been killed by a frenzied mob-of these 19 were Assamese, 5 Kacharis, one Nepali and five others, who could not be identified. Three died as a result of police firing. The death toll might eventually turn out to be much higher as the lists submitted by the Boro Kacharis included 36 missing and those submitted by the Assamese included 21 missing.

Tension between the two communities has festered for long and has centred around the forcible occupation of land. Boros as well as landless tribals from Mangaldoi subdivision, North Kamrup and Kokrajhar belts,have been coming in large numbers and occupying the forest land. The Plains Tribals Council of Assam (PTCA) has actively encouraged them to occupy the land and has successfully thwarted the efforts of the forest authorities—the efforts that were feeble in any case-to evict them. And the tribals have not been occupying the land for the fun of it: they have been pushed in turn. Thus, for instance, Boro occupation became specially aggressive after the 1978 troubles on the Assam-Nagaland border. The fact that the governments of both the states have been too preoccupied, too opportunistic to do anything about land alienation, about enforcing forest laws and the like, has allowed the

tensions to fester and grow.

化酶性原则 医线性定动管 化对射电流

Politics, as usual, has exacerbated the tensions. The PTCA, often at official instigation, has been demanding a separate state—Udayachal and has been feeding Boros the line that the way for them to have their settlements regularised and made permanently secure is to rally round the demand for a separate state from which the Assamese could be pushed out or in which, at best, they would exist only on sufferance. The decision to ram the elections through, lit the fuse: The Assamese had a natural affinity towards the AASU-AAGSP call for boycotting the elections-without-rectification-of-rolls, and, at least in part, for that very reason the Boros and other tribals were determined to vote. As the weeks passed, the rhetoric of all became more and more inflammatory. The violence of each legitimised the violence of the other. Eventually a few sparks were all that was needed. As is usual, the incidents that triggered the killings and arson were trivial in themselves. On 9 February the son of the PTCA candidate was kidnapped. A while later a blacksmith who had been making arrow tips for some Assamese clients stopped doing so on the asking of some Boros. He was beaten up by the Assamese for his refusal:

The tribals attacked on 12 February between 9 am and 11.30 am. The villages of Nigam Krishi Pam, Kokilabazar, Taanigaon and Naharanigaon were devastated. The Assamese launched their counter-attacks on the following day. They were joined in these by the Assamese from across the Sessa river. Violence and arson continued for three full days.

I shall give just two brief extracts from the police reconstruction to show how dangerously we oversimplify when we explain everything away by a single word: communalism.

OHere is the first extract: Interrogation of 6 Boro Kachari youths who were intercepted by villagers near Bedeti under Bihali PS reveals the complicity of the PTGA. Five of these youths were from Udalguri. Charan Mushahari s/oʻLaha Charan Mushahari of village N. C. Sonapur who was an L. P. school teacher at Alopara under Gohpur PS, Nareswar Basumatary and Ponen Basumatari s/o Jogen Basumatari of Rangapara PS, Udalguri, stated that the tribal population living in villages under Gohpur PS planned to attack the villages of the Assamese' people with a view to claim Udayachal upto the rly (railway) line on the south from the foothills of Arunachal Pradesh. In different meetings held by the PTCA it was decided that the Assamese villagers would be driven out by use of force. In these meetings it was also decided that some tribal youths from Udalguri side would be brought to help the tribals in Gohpur area. To organise tribal youths at Udalguri, some tribal youngmen from Gohpur area had visited Udalguri and requested people there to send 200 volunteers. In the beginning of February some tribal youths from Udalguri side came to Gohpur. In a crucial meeting of the tribal people held at Goroimari paddy field at 2 pm on 11.2.83, it was decided to attack Assamese villages on 12.2.83 and arms and weapons were inspected in the meeting. Mention may be made that during the attack, the attackers raised slogans viz PTCA zindabad, joi Udayachal zindabad, joi ma kali

Statements of Suren Basumatari, Nareswar Basumatari, Ponen Basumatari, Lawrence Basumatari enclosed.

□And here is the second:

Information to police:

According to GDE (general diary entry) no 320 of Gohpur PS (police)

Tribals on warpath: sense of alienation



etc.

NEXT WEEK

ARUN SHOURIE IS BIASED

KEWAL VARMA analyses, point by point, Shourie's report on Assam

station) dt 12.2.83 one Shri Durgeswar Bora of Jaranigaon informed PS that 400 to 500 to Boro Kachari armed with various weapons were committing arson in the Assamese villages. The O/C (officer-in-charge) sent requisition to the CRPF campin-charge who is a platoon commander (sub-inspector) of adhoc delta Bn. CRPF. The ABSI (officer) in charge, however, refused to provide any force saying that he could provide men only on the orders of his Coy. (company) commander. The Coy. commander, incidentally, had gone along with Dy. SP (deputy superintendent of police) a probationer, Shri Thanggew in the morning to Hawajan in connection with investigation of a murder case.

As on 12.2.83 Gohpur PS Aleka had five platoons of CRPF deployed there, out of these, two platoons were at Gohpur proper, two platoons at Ghanhigaon and one platoon at Hawajan. At the time of submitting the requisition by O/C, the CRPF unit at Gohpur could have easily provided one platoon for duty. It was only after 9 pm, after the return of the CRPF Coy. commander that the O/C proceeded to the PS along with the probationer Dy. SP, Coy. commander CRPF and two sections of force.

The O/C Gohpur PS claims that he had sent wireless requisition to I/C (in-charge) Ghanhigaon OP (outpost) for sending some force at 4 pm (vide GDE 322 dt 12.2.83). Ghanhigaon OP GDE no 207 dt 12.2.83 says that the messages were received only at 6.30 pm and that incharge faced the same difficulties in getting some force from Ghanhigaon CRPF unit also. But by 7.30 pm the I/C convinced the platoon commander there and sent

some force to Gohpur PS. However, upon reaching Gohpur the CRPF detachment allegedly refused to go with the O/C out of Gohpur.

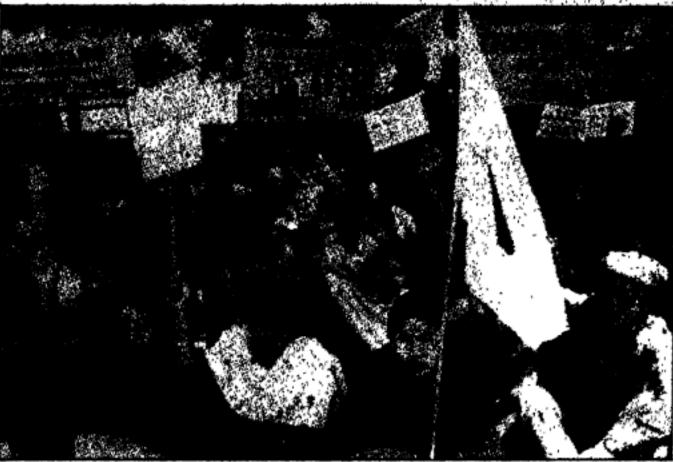
It will be clearly seen from the above that officer-in-charge Gohpur could not take prompt action to contain situation due to nonavailability of forces inspite of presence of 5 platoons of CRPF within his area. The superintendent of police, Darrang, had sent a signal to commandant delta Bn CRPF at Biswanath Chariali requesting him to proceed to Gohpur, but he informed the SP that a senior officer of Assam police should accompany him. Meanwhile, the SP asked Dy. SP Biswanath Chariali, Shri N. K. Sinha to proceed to Gohpur with one platoon CRPF from Behali, another platoon from Biswanath Chariali. The platoon from Biswanath Chariali again made unusual delay and started from there at 10 pm. The next morning trouble again erupted at various places...

It is obvious that the trouble could spread affecting so many villages and continue for three days from 12 February taking toll of so many lives due to inaction of the police force at various levels. Except for the lone visit and opening of fire twice at Jaranigaon on 13 February, the police force in the area did little to intervene or prevent the large scale

violence in the area.

That do these facts show? The foreign hand? Hindu communalists? Do they not, instead, show the perverse pattern of our politics and the total bankruptcy of the state apparatus? Nor should you think that these are things of the past. Recall the role of the PTCA in fomenting tension; recall the mischief that its demand for a separate state---Udayachal---has played in all this, the mischief that it has perpetrated by insinuating that the tribals will stand to gain from the separate state because the Assamese will then be pushed out of the area completely. And now read the news report in the Times of India of 21 May, 1983 under the heading "PM sympathetic to Assam Plains Tribals demand:" The Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, told a delegation of plains tribals of Assam that one major constraint in granting its demand for a separate union territory was the lack of two-thirds majority for the ruling party in the Rajya Sabha...Nevertheless, Mrs Gandhi evinced interest in the demand. She met the delegation twice and studied the maps of proposed union territory and other relevant documents submitted to her by the delegation. Named Udayachal by the Plains Tribal Council of Assam, the proposed territory covers the entire district of Lakhimpur and parts of six other districts on the state...

Even the death of thousands has taught our leaders nothing. Or, has it? Has it confirmed them in their



Boro and Mising demonstrators in Delhi demanding separate state: misled?

ways? Has it proven to them once again that the one sure way to acquire constituencies is to foment fear and that the one sure way to foment fear is to set people at each other's throats?

Thus, like the foreign hand, the communalism bogey does not stick. What sticks is the politics of our rulers, what stick are the preoccupations of the government—they, and the mentality they reflect. I have already recounted the strategy of Mrs Gandhi and Co. and its lethal consequences. But the record shows more. It testifies not just to rulers pursuing narrow political advantage, not merely to bureaucrats being servile, not just to mere villainy, it testifies to perversity.

GOVERNMENT'S PREOCCUPATIONS

You can glimpse this from the official records what were the preoccupations of the government-of R. V. Subrahmanian, the principal advisor to the Governor, and his cohorts-in mid-February, the period when the worst killings took place. Apart from completing the rituals connected with elections one way or another, the records suggest three: keeping the body count low. ensuring the safety of and keeping in good humour the 8000 odd officials... most of them probationers, upper division clerks and lower division clerks-who had been brought to Assam for election duty; and catering to visitors.

On each occasion that news about the killings reached Gauhati, the principal preoccupation of the state administration was to try and minimise the body count. Their analysis too was always the same: a tragedy has occurred but such things happen when history is being made. And so was their policy decision: a new

resolve to take all necessary measures to prevent recurrence of the aforesaid unfortunate incident. Nellie was no different.

By 19 February sufficient information had reached Gauhati for everyone to have realised that a terrible massacre had taken place. A television crew that happened to be in the area had filmed it live. To the knowledge of the government Shekhar Gupta of Indian Express had returned with photographs. He had personally counted 253 bodies and he estimated that about 500 had been killed. A junior officer of the intelligence branch stationed nearby had visited the place and he too had informed Gauhati that "many more than 500" had been butchered.

Accordingly, the message that the IB in Delhi received from its office in Gauhati reported that around 750 had been killed. The IB conveyed the information to the PM's office, the cabinet secretariat as well as to P. P. Navyar, special secretary (home), who was looking after north-east affairs. Nayyar was soon on the phone to Ramesh Chandra, chief secretary, Assam. Their mutual anxiety was to keep the body count down. After all, there was the third round of polling to be gone through the next day. They were keen to make doubly sure that no one should be able to conclude that conditions for a free and fair poll no longer existed.

Ramesh Chandra had little difficulty in satisfying Nayyar that the local IB personnel were, as usual, taking an alarmist view: only 35 to 38 had died in a "group clash," and "the situation was fully in control," he informed. The state government maintained that they had already deputed two officers—one of them an IG of police—and that their assessment was based on an on-the-spot investigation by these officers.

Late at night the state government had conceded 98. The next afternoon when a very senior officer briefed the press informally, he insisted that the deaths were around 250. He berated pressmen for exaggerating the figure. By this time it was well known to the administration in Gauhati, that 497 autopsies had already been completed.

The final count—going strictly by the police records—of this single massacre was 1,383. The government got this figure in an official report on 5 March 1983. It hid it from the public for two months and acknowledged it only when its hands were eventually forced by disclosures.

Apart from going through the rituals of elections the other preoccupation was to protect and keep in good humour the purohits without whom the rituals could not be gone through: the 8,000 odd civil servants who had been brought from Delhi, Bihar, Dehradun etc. Protecting them and keeping them happy took many forms. By the time polling began on 14 February, the aspect that took the maximum time and energy of the senior officers was the plan to evacuate and transport the polling staff once the polling was over. From Gauhati they must be transported swiftly in chartered aircraft. An incredible amount of time of the senior officials was taken up in finalising these plans for evacuation and transport. The "secret" notes on this are just too lengthy to reproduce. Running into seven pages, at a time they testify to the extremely disturbed conditions which had followed upon the farce of elections. The notes lay down how the personnel must be sequestered, how movement by road must be avoided, of how shuttle air services from district towns to Gauhati must be organised.

The third preoccupation in this regard was as bizarre as it can be. It was receiving and distributing fruit-bread packets to the 8,000 odd officials who had come on poll duty from outside the state. Indeed, if you go by the files and the "CRASH" telex messages, this had become a matter of grave importance between the



Ramesh Chandra: suppressing truth

central government and the state administration. On 16 February—a day quite in the middle of the worst killings in the history of independent India—Ramesh Chandra, the chief secretary, had despatched a page long telex to P. P. Nayyar, about these packets:

(FROM) ASSAM DISPUR (TO) HOME NEW DELHI NO. PLA. 1/83 DATED 16TH FEBRU-ARY 1983(.) FOR SHRI P. P. NAYYAR SPECIAL SECRETARY FROM RAMESH CHAN-DRA CHIEF SECRETARY ASSAM (.) FOLLOWING IS THE POSITION RE-LATING TO THE RECEIPT AND DIS-BURSEMENT OF FRUIT BREAD PACKETS (.) ON 11.2.83-14000 FRUIT BREAD PACKETS RECEIVED (.) OUT OF THIS 10500 PACKETS SENT TO DARRANG WITH THE SPE-CIAL CONVOY (.) 8500 PACKETS KEPT FOR CONSUMPTION OF POLL-ING PERSONNEL ON DUTY (.) 2000 PACKETS KEPT FOR POLLING PAR-TY GOING IN CONVOY (.) REMAIN-ING 3500 DISTRIBUTED TO POLLING PERSONNEL WHO ARRIVED IN KAM-

RUP DISTRICT (.) PARA (.) ON 14.2.88 281 CARD BOARD PACKETS CONtaining modern bakery bread AND 60 GUNNY BAGS CONTAINING NAMKIN AND SWEET BOXES WERE RECEIVED (.) OUT OF 281 CARD BOARD PACKETS 160 PACKETS DE-SPATCHED TO TEZPUR (.) 42 PACK-ETS GIVEN TO DIBRUGARH (.) 22 PACKETS TO LILABARI AND 20 PACKETS GIVEN TO KAMRUP (.) THE GUNNY BAGS DESPATCHED AS FOLLOWS (.) 10 BAGS TO DC KAM-RUP (.) 25 BAGS TO DIBRUGARH (.) 15 TO TEZPUR (.) 10 TO NORTH LAKHIMPUR (.) FOR THE POLLING PERSONNEL ON 20.3.83 SIMILAR FRUIT BREAD PACKETS OF 3 TON-NES ARE REQUIRED (.) THEY SHOULD BE F LOWN ON 17.2.83 TO ENABLE DISTRIBUTION (.) WE ARE THANKFUL TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND MODERN BAKERIES FOR THE SUPPLY AND ARRANGE-MENTS IN THIS REGARD (.)

Two days later a second "CRASH" telex, this one from the planning and development commissioner J. K. Bagchi, was sent on the same subject to the home ministry in Delhi. It turned out that in addition to what the chief secretary had so laborisouly enumerated, 45 packets of bread and 42 packets of namkin had also been received and dutifully despatched;

CRASH/TELEX (18.2 83) TO HOME MINISTRY NEW DELHI FROM SHRI BAGCHI, DEVELOP-MENT COMMISSIONER DISPUR

NO AE/JK/MISC/1 DATED 18.2.83 (.) REFER UR MESSAGE NO 11011/ 104/82-NE IV DATED 12.2.83 (.) KIND-LY REFER THE MESSAGE FROM CHIEF SECRETARY ASSAM RE-GARDING RECEIPT AND DESPATCH OF FRUIT PACKETS ON 11.2 83 AND 14.2.83 (.) WE ALSO RECEIVED FOR-TY FIVE PACKETS OF BREAD AND FORTY TWO PACKETS OF NAMKIN ON 17.2.83 (.) THESE ARE BEING DISTRIBUTED TO VARIOUS DIS-TRICTS(.)WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED MESSAGE THAT THREE TONNES OF FOODSTUFF ARE COMING BY FLIGHT ON 18.2 83 (.) THIS WILL ALSO BE DISTRIBUTED TO VARIOUS DISTRICTS (.)

Such were the preoccupations of the state administration on 18 February, by coincidence the very day on which 1,383 were killed in and around Nellie. Or, is it that I am missing the point and that in fact "fruit bread" and "namkin" are code words for something else?

The fourth preoccupation was no less bizarre: what souvenirs should be given to the 8000 odd officials? I can do no better than reproduce two notes from the government files on the subject and one telex message sent to Calcutta. Notice that on these days when the state was on fire the matter received the thoughtful consideration of not just the planning

A picture of despair: paying for others'sins



43



Victims of Gohpur carnage at relief camp: warnings went unheeded

and development commissioner of the state but also of the chief electoral officer, S. R. Khosla, the financial, commissioner of the state, as well as of S. R. Subrahmanian, the chief advisor to the Governor, and of the Governor himself.

Here is the first note:

For the central govt. employees who have performed a commendable job in assisting us during the elections, it was decided that a small memento should be presented to them as a token of our appreciation. The matter was discussed with chief electoral officer and it was felt that we should arrange items not exceeding Rs. 35 (thirty five) each. There are nearly 8,000 polling personnel who have come to the state for election duties including the staff from Bihar. In addition, we should also give similar presents to some of the security personnel etc., on a selective basis. It is, therefore, suggested that we should order 10,000 pieces to be manufactured and delivered positively before 20th February 1983. I have talked with the trade advisor, Calcutta, and he will be extending all necessary help. In order to get such large number of items, an officer will be flown to Calcutta either today or tomorrow to tie up the arrangements and the officer will stay there for 2-3 days for this purpose. C. E. O. may like to approve an expenditure of Rs 3.50 lakh (10,000 x 35) for this purpose

Sd/-J. K. Bagchi 15/2/83 Planning and development commissioner

Shri S. L. Khoshla C.E.O. may kindly approve. Sd/S. L. Khosla 15/2/

Adviser (RVS), I/C finance dept. Approved. I have mentioned this to the Governor also. This may be shown to F. C. for information and record.

Sd/-R. V. Subrahmanian, 15/2/83

□The ,second note is dated 16 February:

Subsequent to this, secretary Shri A. P. Singh, had brought some samples and a small group consisting of myself, secretary, industries, commissioner of taxes, secretary P and CD selected some items which were approved by C. S. on 15.2.83 also. Mr. Safikul Choudhury of commissioner of taxes office has gone to Calcutta with the selected sample and he, in consultation with Assam House officials, will arrange to procure as many items as possible within next 2.3 days, keeping in mind price, quality and uniformity considerations in mind. Locally these articles were not found available to meet such a great demand. Subsequently adviser (SS) rang up and mentioned that some pieces are also being arranged locally by secretary, industries through AGMC which will supplement the availability and meet shortfall likely to arise due to such heavy demand in such a short time. Financial commissioner/election deptt. may kindly see the note and issue concurrence on a priority basis. This has a reference to my discussion with F.C. today.

(J. K. Bagchi), 16/2/83

P and D commissioner.

□Andhere is the third, a telex message:

TO TRADE ADVISER
ASSAM HOUSE
CALCUTTA
FROM SHRI BAGCHI
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSIONER DISPUR

NO AE/JK/MISC/1 DATED 17.2.83 (.) KINDLY REFER TO MY TELEPHO-NIC TALK WITH SHRI CHOUDHURY JT COMMISSIONER OF TAXES AND SHRI HAZARIKA OF ASSAM HOUSE CALCUTTA TODAY STOP IT SEEMS THAT IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO GET MEMENTO PIECES AT SHORT NOTICE FROM CALCUTTA STOP YOU MAY THEREFORE LIKE TO PURCHAISE GIFT PIECES KEEPING IN MIND THE QUALITY PRICE AND DURABILITY OF THE ARTICLES STOP AS DISCUSSED YOU MAY GO AHEAD TO PURCHASE ABOUT SEVEN THOUSAND PIECES THE COST OF EACH ITEM NOT EXCEED-ING RUPEES THIRTY FIVE ON AVER-AGE INCLUDING FREIGHT CHARGES STOP THE FIRST CON-SIGNMENT MAY BE SENT POSITIVE.

LY BY 19-2-83 STOP SANCTION FOR THE AMOUNT IS BEING PROCES-SED AND WILL BE INTIMATED TO YOU SHORTLY.

Pursuant to the decision, as they say, S. Choudhury, joint commissioner of taxes, was despatched to Calcutta. He returned on 20 February two days after Nellie, with 7,096 pieces of souvenirs.

THE ART PAPER

If you think that is as far as things could possibily go you are mistaken. The state administration was further preoccupied with what kind of certificates should be given to the 8,000 officers upon completion of their tour of duty. The certificates had become a matter of great concern to R.V. Subrahmanian. He had dilated at length in meetings on the quality of paper on which the certificates were to be printed and the particular typeface that had to be used, on the text, on whose signatures they should carry, where they should be printed, etc. The "CRASH" message received on 20 February, two days after Nellie massacre, by the trade adviser and director of movement, government of Assam, in Calcutta, will acquaint you with the flavour of high level deliberations and decisions on the matter.

TO TRADE ADVISER ASSAM HOUSE CALCUTTA FROM SHRI J.K. BAGCHI PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER, DISPUR

NO AE/JK/MISC/1 DATED 20.2.83 STOP ATTENTION SHRI HAZARIKA STOP

WE HAD EARLIER DISCUSSED AB-OUT A CERTIFICATE TO BE GIVEN TO THE CENTRAL GOVT EM-PLOYEES WHO HAVE RENDERED SERVICE DURING THE GENERAL ELECTION 1983 STOP KINDLY PRINT TEN THOUSAND CERTIFICATES IN

ART PAPER STOP THE CERTIFI-CATE WOULD BE SIGNED BY CHIEF EMBOSSMENT OF THE GOVT OF VERTED COMMA START THE GOVT APPRECIATION FOR THE EXEM-PLARY AND DEDICATED SERVICE RENDERED BY SHRI/SMT DURING CONNECTION WITH THE CONDUCT OF GENERAL ELECTION 1983 IN-BY THIS OFFICE IN DUE COURSE AND SENT TO THE CONCERNED OFFICER AT DELHI STOP PLEASE CONFIRM ACTION TAKEN STOP FUNDS REQUIRED FOR THIS PUR-POSE WILL BE PLACED AT YOUR DISPOSAL IN DUE COURSE STOP

The arrangements for printing, delivery etc, were still being finalised on 28 February, the day after the new government had been sworn in, when R.V. Subrahmanian left Gauhati. The matter continued to be of great concern to him to the end. But I cannot pursue it anymore as there are visitors to attend to. Handling them was the final, and in many ways the most important, preoccupation of the state administration.

P. C. Sethi, the home minister, flew in from Delhi on 20 February for an on-the-spot study of the Nellie tragedy." Obviously out of sorrow at having been put to such a long flight, he was least interested in the details. He flew by helicopter to Moiribari from where he was to drive in a convoy of vehicles to Nellie. But at Moiribari a local Congress (I)

SECRETARY AND HIS NAME DE-SIGNATION AND FACSIMILE OF HIS SIGNATURE MAY BE PRINTED WITH ASSAM ON THE TOP STOP THE CONTENTS OF THE CERTIFICATES WOULD BE AS UNDER STOP IN-OF ASSAM WISH TO PLACE ON RECORD THEIR DEEP SENSE OF HIS/HER 'ASSIGNMENT TO THE STATE FOR SPECIAL DUTIES IN VERTED COMMA CLOSED STOP PARA THE NAMES MAY BE KEPT BLANK AND THIS WILL BE FILLED UP THE REQUIREMENTS MAY KINDLY BE INDICATED.

day. R.V. Subrahmanian was visibly on edge, nervous. Mrs Gandhi arrives on 21 February... Lands at Tezpur around 9.30 am... Visit to Gohpur.. Lands at helipad near Jagiroad, about eight km from Nellie, around 1 pm. Convoy of vehicles to Nellie... A stop on the highway near Nellie to meet the survivors... Accounts of woe from widows and children... Mrs Gandhi is moved... Photographs... Back into the vehicles... Five km more on the highway... A detour over a dirt road off the main highway to visit the village Muladhari... Several vehicles trailing the PM's vehicle... Mrs Gandhi's vehicle stops near a few huts much before Muladhari... She gets down... Officials and pressmen crowd around her... Dust from the vehicles, some of which have still not come to a stop... Mrs Gandhi: "Saari dhool hamare upar he parti hai (all the dust descends on me)" ... A signal for all to return... Muladhari left unvisited... Helicopter to Gauhati... .A swift, brief meeting with the senior officers at the airport itself... A great tragedy has occurred, the task now is relief and rehabilitation of the survivors, and I am confident that the officers in Assam will carry out this task with the same exemplary efficiency with which they have conducted the elections... Some perfunctory discussion on relief measures and of the post election situation... Plane to Delhi... The officers present could scarcely believe their ears. R.V. Subrahmanian could scarcely believe his luck. Five weeks after her visit to the area Mrs Gandhi was to let it be known that this year she would not be celebrating Holi because of the tragedies in Assam. Of course, in between there had been those 17-course dinners of the Non-Aligned Summit. She hadn t skipped one of them, but that was just two weeks after her visit to the Nellie area. After all, it does take at least a month for these horrors to sink in.



A COLOR WAY COLOR

candidate (since a minister) met

him: Everyone has been to Nellie,

he told Sethi. 'Come to Nagbandha.'

Nagbandha or Nellie, it was all the

same to Sethi. They drove to Nagban-

dha in the comfort to which our

ministers are accustomed. Thirty-

seven bodies were strewn around.

Sethi had a distant, vacant look, and

seemed much relieved when he was

told that a message had just come in

from Gauhati to the effect that Mrs

Gandhi wanted him to speak to her

on the telephone. That was all he

needed. Sethi went straight back to

the car...-thence to the helicop-

ter ... -- thence to Gauhati ... -- tele-

phone from Gauhati to Delhi...—And

soon enough, off by the plane to

Delhi. He hadn't missed by not visit-

ing Nellie for the "on the spot

study." No officer in Gauhati had

taken his visit seriously. But by now

it was known that Mrs Gandhi her-

self would be visiting Nellie the next

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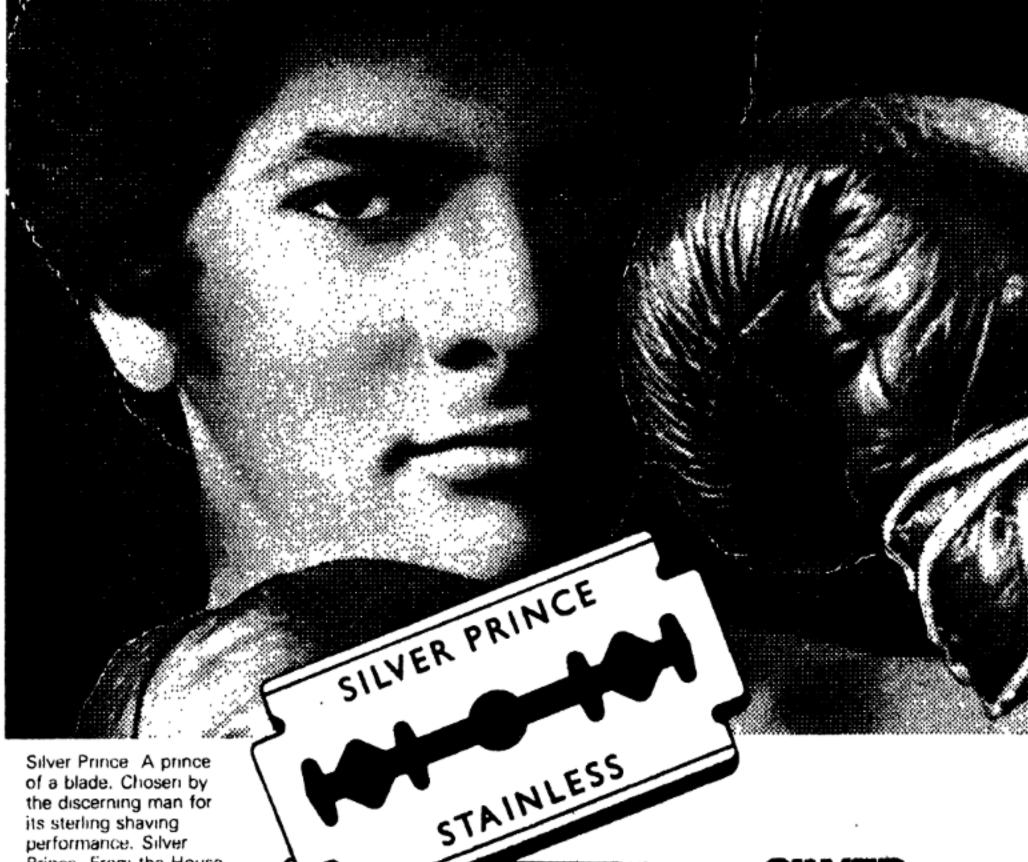
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A STAINLESS REPUTATION FOR SHAVING PERFECTION

Is the army's discipline going down?

any are worried by an apparent tendency on the part of soldiers (the term applies to officers and jawans), to take the law into their own hands. They feel that this trend indicates growing indiscipline in the army. Discipline is a method of training of the mind: it entails education, correction and punishment. Discipline works at three levels. Every adult has his personal code of discipline which is derived from his environment. Secondly, every profession has its group discipline. Thirdly, at the national level, we ought to have a sense of discipline that expresses itself in our reactions to everyday

civic responsibilities. Group discipline is fostered in the army through training, precept and practice so that a soldier is prepared to kill his enemy or lose his life while carr;ing out the orders of his superiors. Group discipline is developed by building up a bond of trust between a commander and his men. Therefore, an officer is charged with the responsibility of looking after his men through thick and thin. This ethos is best summed up by the motto of the Indian Military Academy: "The safety, honour and welfare of yourcountry come first always and everytime; the honour, welfare and comfort of your men come next; your own safety, honour and welfare come last always and everytime." An army ethos is fostered by a commander's functions in three fields of activity. Firstly, the recognition of a subordinate's performance by the issue of appropriate rewards and incentives: medals, pay, promotions and postings. This is largely a matter of internal administration. The second function involves the prompt redressal of a soldier's grievances. Internal grievances are dealt with by the military administration itself; it is the external grievance that has become a problem. Soldiers who go on two months' leave from a border outpost to resolve their home problems, may return without being able to meet the administrators concerned or to finish their work. Sometimes, letters to departments of the government remain unanswered. Whereas this is no excuse for a frustrated soldier to take the law into his own hands, we must accept that a failure to resolve his problems will affect any soldier's

morale.



Lt Gen. E. A. VAS (Retd)

The third function of command involves dealing with a soldier under military law when he does wrong. The Constitution has, therefore, kept discipline and other related matters pertaining to the armed forces out of the normal supervision and control of the Supreme Court and High Courts. In the army, the administration of justice is regulated through the Army Act and Army Rules. Military law provides for unbiased, speedy and fair trials. The system has stood the test of time. Whilst disciplinary matters have been kept out of the normal control of outside authorities, soldiers are not exempt from the writ jurisdiction of the courts. This has encouraged some soldiers, accused of serious military offences which are still in the process of investigation, to file writ petitions and obtain ex parte stay orders to buy time. Such writs initiate a chain reaction which sometimes undermines service discipline if it delays a decision.

A soldier, though imbued with group discipline, is like any other individual Indian when he is at home with his family. It is then that a soldier's individual sense of discipline is sorely tested. If he stands in a queue, his family may never catch the bus—so, he is tempted to join the crowd and throw his weight about. If he wants cement, he may have to pay a bribe to get his quota

Unless our elected representatives set an example, the nation and the armed forces cannot improve. All armies are a product of the national scene and cannot be divorced from it...

quickly, or else do without it. Some see no harm in this, and argue that because our soldiers continue to live in cantonments, which are relics of imperial Britain, they remain divorced from national life, clinging to false standards instead of becoming a people's army. The Chinese army, which is a people's army, is one of the most disciplined armies in the world; so are the US Marines. Good armies cannot be undisciplined. The question of cantonments and their future is a separate issue which is not related to discipline. No soldier who has a family can be dissociated from the national ethos. The family constantly reminds the soldier that the root difference between the secular national ethos of the army and that of his country, is regionalism and indiscipline which arises from an inability of the government, civil administration and law courts to govern, administer and impart justice promptly, according to wellestablished norms.

The key to the situation is the politician. Unless our elected representatives set an example, the nation and the armed forces cannot improve. All armies are a product of the national scene and cannot be divorced from it. This brings us back to the question: Is the army's discipline going down? One can say with confidence that there is nothing wrong with the armed forces which is not wrong with the nation. Free democratic India will get the government that the people elect. A government gets the armed forces that it nurtures.

Soldiers know that a better army is not evolved merely by increasing salaries, status and creature comforts. Remedies for improvement are less a question of money and more a matter of political perception, will and example. The shaping of a strategy and the structure of a higher defence organisation with an army to execute this efficiently, are political acts which require sincerity of purpose and intellectual ability. Tanks, aircraft and warships are important, but the primary instrument of war is man. Anything that directly or indirectly undermines the morale and discipline of the soldier will shake the bedrock of the armed forces. If the discipline of the army goes, then with it will go its strength and effectiveness. When that happens, the security of India will be threatened.

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LOOKING GLASS

Jaguars need overhauling



Jaguar: a bad buy?

The Jaguar, the much-vaunted deep penetration strike aircraft (DPSA) sold by British Aerospace to the Indian Air Force has been found inadequate. Informed sources claim that, with its full load of armaments which include the French 550 Magic Matra missiles, the Jaguar's rate of climb is comparatively slower than expected. A DPSA is expected to fly at treetop level and supersonic speed into enemy territory, unload its bombs on the target and then, gaining height rapidly, return to its base. But because of its slow rate of climb, the Jaguars now with the IAF, are not being able to fulfil what is known in air force jargon as the airstaff order requirements or the ASR. The malady lies in its engine-AII AFT LIUE HP-24-which is considered underpowered for the task. This places the Jaguars, according to some Indian experts, slightly above "semi-obsolescent" aircraft in that category. The IAF signed a contract with British Aerospace in 1980 for the purchase of Jaguars worth over Rs 1,500 crores. While 40 of the British-supplied aircraft are already flying with the IAF (two others have crashed) there are more of the Hindustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL)assembled Jaguars with the operational squadrons. This is because HAL carried out some modifications to the aircraft enabling it to pack more punch. Meanwhile, a highpowered Indian delegation is leaving for Britain to discuss with British Aerospace officials how the aircraft's efficiency could be raised to the desired

Another ASIAD man is rewarded

The newly appointed secretary of the information and broadcasting ministry, S.S. Gill, would, from all accounts, be the last person to win any popularity contest in the capital. Mr Gill's reputation has preceded him. Once secretary general of the special organising committee of the ninth Asian Games, Mr Gill distinguished himself by being openly contemptuous of Doordarshan, AIR and the Indian media as a whole. The rumour mills had it that he was in contact with an American firm interested in securing exclusive TV rights of the Games, and his principal aim seemed to be to get Doordarshan out of the picture. He has even been quoted as calling Doordarshan a bunch of chaparkanatis (useless fellows). Strangely, he was removed from his post a couple of months before the Asiad was due to begin—at about the time Mr Rajiv Gandhi began monitoring the preparations more closely. His recent appointment (and more so to the post) is, therefore, a surprise. According to people who have some experience of him, Mr Gill is a far-from-pleasant person to deal with if you happen to have anything to do with the Indian media.

Bureaucrats to the fore

Both Mrs Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi are increasingly depending on civil servants rather than their political aides for political missions. One recent example is that of the Prime Minister's principal secretary, P. C. Alexander, who was asked to ensure that government officials dutifully carry out the plans and ideas of Rajiv Gandhi also. That makes Mr Alexander, the de facto chief of Mr Gandhi's secretariat as well, and by implication, one of the most powerful persons in the country. One other civil servant who wields considerable political power today is Mr V. S. Tripathi, exjoint secretary in the PM's secretariat. Recently he resigned from the IAS to work fulltime in Mrs Gandhi's secretariat. Predictably, some political operators, for instance, M. L. Fotedar, who have been ruling the roost till recently seem to be on their way out to make room for the new stars. The fortunes of one of Mrs Gandhi's most loyal aides, R. K. Dhawan, too seem to be on the decline.

The selling of a Prime Minister



Dularam, CM Mathur and Mrs Gandhi

What has happened to the enormous amount of money that Rajasthan's social welfare minister Mr Dularam supposedly collected on the eve of Mrs Gandhi's visit to the state? As soon as Mrs Gandhi agreed to visit Raisinghnagar in Ganganagar district of Rajasthan, the first thing that Mr Dularam, assigned to look after the Prime Minister during her tour, did, was to go about asking people to donate cash and silver so that Mrs Gandhi could be weighed in silver. The going was good for Dularam for about a month when the first murmurs of resentment were heard, as the secretary of the Ganganagar DCC(I), Pratap Singh, alleged in a letter to chief minister Shiv Charan Mathur, that Dularam was extorting money from the people in the name of the Prime Minister. Initially, Dularam did not take notice of these rumblings and went on with his fund collection drive quite vigorously. According to some of his own partymen by 15 April he had collected more than Rs 20 lakhs. He must have been quite aggressive in his ways, or else the MLAs and MPs of a party who live on such collections could not have gathered sufficient courage to write to the Prime Minister that Dularam was giving a bad name to the party. An irritated Mrs Gandhi told a delegation of party legislators from Rajasthan that she had not authorised Dularam to collect money in her name and later on when she visited Raisinghngar she cancelled the lunch appointment at Dularam's place. Nor did she agree to be weighed in silver. But nothing has been heard of the money (according to some estimates Rs 50 lakhs) that Dularam is supposed to have collected.

PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS

CPI(M) maintains supremacy

While the Congress(I) improves its position in West Bengal

Calcutta: Nowhere was the polarisation of political forces in West Bengal more evident than in the state's panchayat elections where the two major contenders---the CPI(M) and the Congress(I)—waged a battle to gain control of about 56,000 seats in the zilla parishads, panchayat samitis, and gram panchayats. As the results of the elections (the second since 1978) held on 31 May started coming out soon after the elections were over it convincingly established that West Bengal's rural voters were unwilling to waste their votes by voting for smaller parties or groups. The result: the smaller Left Front partners like the RSP, Forward Bloc and the CPI, which after initial bickerings over the allocation of seats with the CPI(M), had to be content with the crumbs thrown at them, have suffered humiliating reverses. By 2 June the results for 43,474 (out of 46,050) gram panchayat seats were known: the CPI(M) had secured 23,401 seats and the Congress(I) 14,120. The RSP, CPI and the Forward Bloc, the Janata, and BJP together could not secure even 2,000 seats. Even the independents did better, accounting for some 3,000 seats.

One reason for the Congress(I)'s. impressive show is the internecine quarrel among the Left Front partners which saw them pitted against one another in a large number of constituencies in what was officially acknowledged by the Left Front as "friendly contests." This was perhaps unavoidable to an extent after the CPI(M)refused to accommodate the demands of the smaller partners for more seats, which they wanted as they feared that unless they increased their strength in the rural areas and carved out areas of influence for themselves through control of the panchayats, they would never be able to counter the clout of the CPI(M) within the Front. And if the CPI(M) were to have its way they would be reduced to ciphers, even in their tradition stronghold. In the resulting triang... lar contests in a number of constituencies, however, the smaller partners of the Left Front emerged as the losers, ironically, bringing about the situation they wanted to avoid in the first place by deciding to go for "friendly contests" among themseives.

The CPI(M), which had emerged supremely victorious in the 1978 panchayat elections, strove to maintain its supremacy, if not increase it. And despite the charges of corruption against the party at the village levels, the CPI(M) repeated its success. The Congress(I), on the other hand, which contested the elections for the first time this year, put up a remarkably impressive show, faring even better than the RSP, the CPI and the Forward Bloc.

For the Congress(I), the stakes were higher: it was not simply a question of control of the lower bodies; it was a question of survival. The Congress which did not take part in the 1978 panchayat elections, boycotting the elections officially at the last moment and instead allowing its candidates to contest unofficially as independents, had realised that in order to keep its hold on the rural areas, a sizeable representation in the elected panchayat bodies was necessary. For, in the last five years, the *panchayats* have brought about a change in the power balance in the state. They have become catalysts for development in the rural areas and in granting funds for rural development. The zilla sabhadhipati has become more important than the local MP or MLA who has no executive authority, even

Panchayat polling in progress



in the sub-division or the block, it is the gram samity or the gram panchayat which is more powerful than the sub-divisional officer (SDO) or the block development officer. (BDO), the traditional dispensers of benefits.

It was perhaps this which led to the Congress(I)'s concerted campaign wherein the party's traditional drawback-factionalism-was less pronounced. (Not that the Congress-I did not have its share of internal bickerings. For instance, on the question of granting party tickets, Congress-I groups from various districts gheraoed the party general secretary, Dr Gopal Das Nag in his office, and abused Santosh Roy, a secretary of the party. And the party president, Mr Anandagopal Mukherjee, wisely decided to stay away from his office during the last few days of filing of nomination papers in order to avoid any unpleasant scene.)

Thus, the Congress(I)'s traditional supporters, who were demoralised so far by the party's low key activities, rallied to fight the CPI(M)'s dominance in the social, economic and political spheres in rural areas through the working of the panchayats. Finally, the bickerings within the Left Front partners over the allocation of seats helped the Congress(I) which effectively ate into the vote banks, mostly of the CPI, RSP and the Forward Bloc. As Mr Makhan Paul, the RSP leader, admitted shortly after the results were announced, it was sad to see that the Congress(I) was gaining at the cost of the Forward Bloc and the RSP. As the election results indicated, in most constituencies where there were triangular fights between the CPI(M), the Congress(I) and a Front partner, it was either the CPI(M) or the Congress(I) candidate who emerged victorious. This was most evident in the districts of Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri, the former considered to be the stronghold of the Forward Bloc and the latter of the RSP. In both these districts the performances of the Forward Bloc and the RSP were far below expectations.

The Congress(I), predictably, raked up issues like the nonperformance of the CPI(M)-led Left Front government: it had failed to provide adequate water to the rural areas and even the wells that had been sunk benefited only the gram pradhans; the panchayars were charged with corruption, nepotism and misappropriation of funds and the impotency of the panchayars to meet the growing needs of the

people.

What effect could the results of the panchayat elections have on the Left Front? There is little doubt that the smaller Front partners like the Forward Bloc, the RSP and the CPI have been "cut down to size." Throughout the period when the seats were being allocated and even during the campaigning, the lower leadership of the CPI(M) had been insisting that the Front partners had been simply basking in the CPI(M)'s glory and that on their own they would not be a political force to reckon with. This view has been vindicated by the results of the panchayat elections. This may have one result: the lower leadership of the CPI(M) may try and play a more active role in determining the relations between the CPI(M) and the Front partners in future.

After the death of Mr Promode Dasgupta, there has been a loosening of the state leadership's grip on the leaders at the panchayat level and some erosion in its control and authority over the grassroot worker. Mr Saroj Mukherjee, the present chief of the state unit of the CPI(M) has neither the personality nor the foresight of Mr Dasgupta to command their unquestioning loyalty. Since Mr Dasgupta's death, the district and lower level leaders have shown a growing tendency to express their views strongly. For instance, though the state leadership of the CPI(M) decided to have a seat adjustment with the RSP in West Dinajpur, the district leadership of the party refused to agree to it. It is, therefore, likely, that the CPI(M) may be less charitable towards its Front partners in future. Besides, the infighting within the Front during the panchayat elections has embittered their relations to a degree where it might be difficult for the younger leadership of the CPI(M) to be as accommodating and understanding towards the other Front partners as the state leaders have been stressing.

This, in turn, is likely to be reflected in the allocation of seats to the Front partners in the next Assembly or parliamentary elections, with a larger share of the seats going to the CPI(M). This tendency has been marked since the CPI(M) became a partner of the 1967 United Front government. Will this trend continue and the next electoral battle in the state be between the CPI(M) and the Congress(I), bringing true the prophecy of Kamal Guha, West Bengal's agriculture minister and a member of the Forward Bloc, on the eve of the elections that the "Left Front is finished"?

Saumitra Banerjee

CRIME

Is Dr Mishra shielding his partymen?



Jagannath Mishra: threatened?

Patna: "The mystery of Swetnisha's death can only be solved if Miss Rajeshwari Saroj Das speaks up," Patna's senior superintendent of police, Mr Kishore Kunal had told this correspondent shortly after the death of Mrs Swetnisha Trivedi, the adopted daughter of Miss Rajeshwari Das, a former deputy chairperson of the Bihar Legislative Council and presently an MLC. The 25-yearold, pretty woman known for her friendship with some important politicians of the ruling party had died under mysterious circumstances in the early hours of 8 May. A report in a Patna daily triggered the police into action; Swetnisha's body was exhumed and a post mortem carried out. The viscera report revealed that Mrs Trivedi had died due to malathion poisoning, contrary to the two death certificates issued, the first of which said that Mrs Trivedi was a victim of internal haemorrhage while the second settled for "cardiac arrest" (SUNDAY 5 June). However, no arrests were made on grounds of "insufficient evidence."

NEXT WEEK

CORPORATE CASTEISM IN INDIA

An EXCLUSIVE report on how Indian business houses are run

By RALPH BUULTJENS

An internationally recognised authority on business, finance and investment

Yet, when two persons turned police witnesses or 24 May, and a day later Miss Das gave her statement before the chief judicial magistrate of Patna, giving her account of Swetnisha's death, and even as the police were gearing up to make the first arrests, Bihar's chief minister, Dr Jagannath Mishra abruptly handed the case over to the central bureau of investigation (CBI), putting the brakes on any further investigation by the Patna police. Why did Dr Mishra hand the case over to the CBI? Was it because, as he has said, the opposition leaders were demanding it? Or, was it because police investigations were involving far too many Congress(I) politicians in the

The statement given by Nirbhay Kumar, a student of A.N. Singh College, Patna, who used to live in the servants' quarters of Miss Das' residence, and Trishuldhari Singh, a P & T employee who was a frequent visitor at the Das residence, were corroborated by Miss Das a day later. According to their statements, on 6 Mày,Swetnisha had attended a party. She returned late, feeling depressed. After taking a few Mandrax tablets, she went to sleep. The next morning she woke up feeling ill. Dr T.P. Ojha was then summoned, who advised that she be taken to the Patna Medical College Hospital (PMCH). At around 4.15 pm on 7 May, Swetnisha Trivedi was admitted to the emergency ward of the PMCH. Accompanying her were Miss Das, Mr Dudh Nath Paswan, the chief whip of the Congress(I) legislative party and Nirbhay Kumar. At around 6 pm, after Swetnisha's stomach had been washed, all of them left the hospital without informing the authorities. Mr Paswan dropped Miss Das, Swetnisha and Nirbhay Kumar at Miss Das' house and went away.

At around 8 pm, Trishuldhari Singh called up Miss Das and in the course of their conversation, Miss Das told Mr Singh that her adopted daughter was unwell. Mr Singh then told Miss Das that he would come. over immediately with a doctor. A little while later, Trishuldhari Singh arrived at Miss Das' house in a car with Vinod Kumar, a medical representative, and Raghuvar Jha, the son of Bihar Assembly speaker Radhanandan Jha. While Raghuvar Jha sat in the car, Vinod Kumar and Trishuldhari Singh went into the house. On entering Swetnisha's room, they found her lying on a cot. While Vinod

Kumar attended to Swetnisha, Mr Singh went to the adjoining room to ring up Daltongunj, on a request from Miss Das. Meanwhile, after examining Swetnisha's pulse, Vinod Kumar sent Nirbhay Kumar to the car to fetch a packet of "medicine." The medicine was then administered to Swetnisha and the packet returned to the car. After a few minutes, the three men left in the car.

Just after their departure Miss Das had two more guests: Prem Narain Garhwal, minister of state for prisons and Ratan Jagwani, a cloth merchant who was known to be close to Swetnisha. After staying for half an hour they left. It was after this that Swetnisha's condition started to deteriorate and at around 3.30 am on 8 May she died. Dr K.K. Jha was called who issued a death certificate stating that Swetnisha Trivedi had died due to "internal haemorrhage."

The, statements of Miss Das, Trishuldhari Singh and Nirbhay Kumar show that any further investigation into the case would definitely involve some leading Congress(I) politicians who would have to answer some embarrassing questions. Were they then exercising pressure on the CM to scuttle the case? On the night of 25 May some 30 MLAs of the

大人之后,我不会不知为他的人 人名英伯伊斯尔克斯特 Bihar Assembly (which include a few Janata MLAs) met Dr Mishra and requested him to look into the matter. Before they left they even issued a threat to the CM: if Dr Mishra did not act, and soon, he could not count on their support in the coming Assembly session. It is believed that Dr Mishra agreed to look into the matter. The next day, Dr Mishra declared that the case would be transferred to the CBI, thus giving breathing time to the MLAs and, perhaps, some time for the persons involved in Swetnisha's alleged murder to destroy the evidence before the CBI agrees to take up the case. Saumitra Banerjee

PUNJAB

The PM's overdue visit

Chandigarh: Mrs Indira Gandhi's one-day tour of Punjab, on 29 May, created the impression that the state's crisis will continue for some time at least. Evidently, she has decided to fight the Akali agitation at a political level. She made it amply clear in her speeches at Ludhiana, Nabha and Gurdaspur that she would not succumb to any pressure in settling the issues that have shaken the state.

The three mammoth public meetings which the Prime Minister addressed were, apart from anything else, a great show of strength for the Congress(I). Although she did not attack the Akalis vituperatively, she minced no words in saying that she would stand firm in the face of the Akali demands. Referring to the demands, Mrs Gandhi said that as some of them concerned other states too, these states would have to be con-

sulted. "I have been doing what was in my hands. The religious demands have been conceded," she said, adding that those pursuing the path of agitation and violence should now come to the negotiating table and call a stop to the forces from within and outside that were deliberately trying to weaken the country.

Dressed in a maroon salwar khameez with a dupatta covering her head, (the traditional dress of Punjabi women), Mrs Gandhi won over the hearts of the audiences when she said that the patriotism of the Sikhs was never in any doubt. She maintained that they have always fought and sacrificed for the freedom of the

Mrs Gandhi with chief minister Darbara Singh: not succumbing to pressures



country and their achievements on the economic front were also wellknown. She further said, diplomatically, that both Hindus and Sikhs from Punjab have always been in the. vanguard, both in the defence of the country as well as in the all-round development of the state, but more was expected from them particularly as they lived in a very sensitive border state. Giving her explanation for this sudden visit, Mrs Gandhi said, "I have not come to Punjab with any particular mission. My visit, in fact, was overdue. I had not come after the 1980 elections in which the Congress(I) had won with a thumping majority in the Lok Sabha and the state Assembly. I wanted to thank you for it."

Inevitably, the subject of national security and the necessity for a strong centre was broached over and over again. Mrs Gandhi continuously stressed that the country would not be allowed to disintegrate and its honour would be protected at any cost. However, she stated, if all the states started agitations, it would lead the country nowhere. Strongly opposing the demand for more powers to the state, she used the analogy of parents and children—if the parents are weak they would be in no position to look after their children; similarly, if the centre is weak it cannot take good care of the states. And today, she argued, a strong centre is all the more necessary in order to meet the country's economic crisis and external threat. Merely a day after the Prime Minister's visit, the Youth Congress(I) organised a silent peace march at Amritsar, in which nearly 70,000 YC(I) workers participated. Interestingly, almost 60 per cent of the processionists were Sikhs in order to contest the claim that the Akali Dal was the only party to represent the Sikh com-

munity. The same day, an emergency meeting of the Akali Dal took place at the Teja Singh Sammundi Hall in Amritsar. At this meeting the most significant resolution made was that any decision regarding the demands of the party, reached by Sant Harchand Singh Longowal with the centre, would be acceptable to the entire Sikh panth. Besides the senior Akali leaders, the meeting was also attended by the district jathedars, and party MLAs. Former chief minister of Punjab, Mr Prakash Singh Badal, addressed the press conference on behalf of the Akali Dal. The Akalis turned down the proposal made by Mrs Gandhi in her speeches, of suspending the agita tion. The other major decision taken at the meeting, was to send senior Akali leaders, headed by Prakash Singh Badal and Mr Gurcharan Singh Tohra to Jammu and Kashmir to campaign for the National Conference candidates, and at the time of writing, one team had already left for Jammu. Mr Badal claimed that the meeting did not discuss any formula or proposal from the centre on their demands, for, according, to him, there is neither such a formula nor proposal. He criticised the Prime Minister's statements that the Akalis had lost control over the agitation and also denied that Mr Harkishan Singh Surjeet (CPI-M) leader, met with any Akali leader with a proposal from the centre.

Jagdeo Singh Talwandi and Sukhjinder Singh, known supporters of the militant Sikh leadership, were, however, conspicuous by their absence. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale has been repeatedly saying in

his daily speeches from Manji Sahib that any settlement with the centre on the party's demands would be reached only with the approval of the Sikh Sangat Akalis. Therefore, the decision that any settlement made by Longowal with the centre will be accepted by the entire Sikh panth, has been seen as another attempt to shake the militant Sikh leader. What ultimately happens will now depend upon the opposition meeting scheduled to be held in Delhi on 15 June and another Akali agitation reportedly scheduled for 17 June.

Rita Sharma

ASSAM

Saikia gains time

Gauhati: An uneasy calm seems to have settled over Assam after the bloodshed and turbulence of the February elections. Although the bitterness and hatred still remain, the state is slowly limping back to normalcy under the stewardship of chief minister Hiteswar Saikia. However, it is too early to gauge whether this is due to the efforts of the new Congress(I)-led administration or due to the fact that the accumulated violence of years had finally burst and spent itself out. Although attacks and counter-attacks will continue, it is unlikely that the fury and intensity of the election killings will be repeated for a long time to come.

Whatever the reasons, Hiteswar Saikia seems to be firmly entrenched in the saddle and for the time being seems to have the upper hand over the agitationists. The aftermath of the unprecedented violence has had its repurcussions on the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) executive and the temporary suspension of the movement is largely to give respite to the agitation leadership to reorganise itself and draw up a fresh strategy.

The first reverberations of the Nellie killings were felt when an attempt was made by the Muslim

Saikia: no open defiance



members of AASU to bring to the notice of the student leaders the need to shake off the strong BJP-RSS influence in its ranks. This resulted in a secret meeting of the Muslim students in Gauhati last month. The AASU executive, in retaliation, has ousted the Muslim leaders, including the AASU vice-president, Nurul Hussain and Kamrup district union president, Nekibur Zaman, and stripped them of their posts. Their places are being sought to be filled by more pliant Muslim members of the AASU

The students have also realised the folly of antagonising the powerful tea gardens and tribal communities of the state, and are attempting to build their bridges with both these groups. A number of meetings have already taken place among tribal leaders and the AASU bigwigs. Feelers are also being sent to the tea labour, indicating that the Assamese have no quarrel with them. However, it is unlikely that at this late stage they can count on the active support of any of these groups. Meanwhile, examinations which had been postponed due to the elections are now on in full swing in the state. Until these are over in early September, no fresh agitational programme will be announced.

The AASU leaders are also waiting for the verdict on a writ petition filed by a private citizen of Gauhati challenging the validity of the Assembly elections based on the 1979 electoral rolls. The case is scheduled to come up for hearing sometime in July. The ex-chairman of the Purbanchaliya Loka Parishad, the ebullient Nibaran Bora, has also filed a petition in the Gauhati High Court, claiming that in declaring and conducting the Assam elections, the election commission has disregarded all provisions of the Constitution and the Representation of the People's Act. Among the respondents included in the case are Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the chief election

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commissioner of India and the Chief electoral officer of Assam. Mr Bora will be arguing his own case when it

comes up for hearing.

As verdicts on both these cases are awaited, chief minister Hiteswar Saikia is going about revamping the entire administrative setup in a bid to bridge the yawning gap between the administration and the people. Although the majority community of Assam refuses to recognise the government, the chief minister claims that "a lot of people including the Sangramis who were once opposed to the elections, come to see inc everyday." He feels that this government is steadily coming closer to the people as is testified by the long queues waiting outside the Janata Bhavan to meet him and his colleagues.

While at the moment, Mr Saikia is not plagued by dissidence like other Congress(I) chief ministers, he has ruffled quite a few powerful feathers within the party. A common complaint against him is that he does not

take any of his ministers into confidence, preferring to operate, instead, with a close coterie of civil servants who owe personal loyalty to him since the days he was the emergency home minister. Besides the Pradesh Congress(I) president, Horen Talukdar, who is openly sulking for not getting the chief ministership, certain powerful exministers are also unhappy with the portfolios allotted to them. However, at the moment, chance's of open defiance may be ruled out as the high command will not encourage any dissidence and seems to have full confidence in Saikia. Within the next few months, the chief minister will have to prove whether or not he is capable of bringing the state back onto the rails and healing the scars that have marred the social fabric of Assam in the last four years. And this cannot be done by the divide and rule policy favoured by the Congress(1).

Seema Guha

MEGHALAYA

Pressure tactics

Shillong: The merger of Meghalaya's two major regional parties—the All Party Hill Leaders' Conference (APHLC) and the Hill State People's Democratic Party (HSPDP)—is in the offing. The leaders of the two parties have now realised that unless they come together, the Congress(1) or any other national party will explot the situation. Since 1978, no party has been able to gain absolute majority in the state's Assembly polls because of the plethora of regional parties in the fray and the consequent splitting of votes. It resulted in the periodically-changing coalition government, with Congress(1), on occasions, holding the upper hand. The urgency for a unity of regional parties was felt by the leaders when the three party Meghalaya United Parliamentary Party (MUPP) government was toppled in April by the Congress(I) in a wily game of defection. Both the APHLC and the HSPDP were constituents of the MUPP.

A veil of secrecy has been thrown around the merger move. Mr B. B. Lyngdoh, the APHLC leader and initiator of this move, is still tightlipped. When this correspondent called on him at his newly rented house at Laitumkhrah on 17 May, he refused to divulgeeither the nature or progress of the talks relating to the merger. The HSPDP general secretary, W. Syiemiong, however, told SUNDAY that till the third week of May three rounds of talks had been held between the leaders of the parties on the proposed merger: He said hoth the narties aureed in orin.

ciple to bury their separate identities and come together to form a new state-based party. Mr Syremiong, former speaker and minister, further said that the merger would be effected in phases and hinted that the talks would take tangible shape in a month's time. A section of the APHIC leadership feels that state's third regional party, the Public Demand Implementation Committee(P-DIC), should also be brought under the banner of the new party. PDIC's controversial president. Martin Narayan Majaw, told SUNDAY that he had already been approached by Mr Lyngdoh in this regard.

Mr Lyngdoh, who was Meghalaya's CM for two terms said that the tribals should be taken into confidence at all stages of the merger efforts. Perhaps this 'explains why the one-time rivals—the HSPDP president and former MP, Hopingstone Lyngdoh, and B. B. Lyngdohjointly addressed a public rally at Mawkhar area of the city recently to condemn the defectors who joined the Congress(I)-led Meghalaya Democratic Front (MDF). An agitation against the Congress(I), with a view to turning the tribal mind in favour of the merger, is on the cards.

Mr Lyngdoh, Mr Sylemiong and Mr Majaw, in separate conversations, stressed the need for a distinct line of demarcation between regionalism and national interest. Said Mr Lyngdoh, "New Delhi should stop meddling in our affairs. The tribals should be allowed to develop according to their genius." He endorsed the

ministers for more powers to the states. Mr Majaw said, "Nobody should doubt our patriotism. It is now a proven fact that the tribals did their maximum to feed the refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan and help in the liberation of Bangladesh. But that does not mean we will always submit to the centre's policy of regimentation." He felt that the state government should always safeguard the interests of the tribals, "otherwise we would be swamped by the outsiders." He demanded that President Zail Singh should immediately give assent to the Meghalaya Regulation of Employment Bill, 1980, which seeks to regulate jobs in the state for non-indigenous persons. He opposed the family planning drive among the tribals and supported the plea for an increase of the tribal population. Said Mr Sylemiong, "Defence, externalaffairs and communications are the centre's preserve. We never contest this. In return it (New Delhi) should allow us the undisputed sway over our rights."

However, some obstacles on the way to the merger remain. There is a legacy of personality feuds between the leaders of APHLC and HSPDP. The coalition government between them, forged in 1978, had to break up in the wake of intermittent squabbles among the leaders. The support bases of these two parties are also contradictory. While APHLC is elitist, the HSPDP has a rural outlook, with its moorings mainly in the west Khası hills. The PDIC would prefer an alliance with the HSPDP rather than with the APHLC. Said Mr Majaw. "The APHLC is a party of leaders, with no following. On the other hand, the HSPDP has sizable following, with no leader worth the

name."

The merger moves are accompanied by a predictable surge in regional chauvinism. There is a snowballing demand to put pressure on the centre to give assent to the sensitive Meghalaya Land Transfer Act, which seeks to restore the alienated tribal land with restrospective effect from 26 January 1950. Recently, the demand for giving a tribal name to the state found favour in the Assembly. The Khasi Students' Union (KSU), a militant student organisation, is fast emerging as a rallying point for students and youths. Stridently chavinistic, it harps on the pet theme of Khasi identity. Robert Kharshiing, president of KSU, said that the organisation would soon move the state government to enforce "inner line regulation" on the entry of non-Khasis in the state. Will the merger bring an end to the political uncertainty in the state, which is already a communal and ethnic divide? Or will it spawn a militant wave of tribalism? Picturesque Meghalaya may, perhaps, not be the same again.

Santanu Choch

Long-term preparation

Cuttack: The manner in which Biju Patnaik has been going around the state, holding public meetings, Janata Party workers' rallies and strengthening the party's organisational setup, gives the impression that elections to the state legislature are round the corner. Despite the fact that the Congress(I) government's tenure will last till mid-June 1985 (unless something unforeseen happens), the irrepressible Janata leader has been announcing the kind of catchy slogans that are heard only during

election campaigns.

Biju Patnaik, along with other party leaders, has already moved around to all the 14 districts of the state on a month's hurricane tour According to all reports, his meetings even in remote corners of the state were invariably well-attended. Obviously, such heartening turnout has restored the vigour and flamboyant disposition he used to have before his heart operation last year. The Janata Party's offensive under Biju Patnaik's command is the result of two factors. First is that a formidable united opposition party, following the merger of the Lok Dal, Janata and Congress(S) and a faction of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the Janata flag has come into being with all the potential of an alternative to the Congress (I). Second is the fact that the J. B. Patnaik government, battered almost daily by party infighting and by the exposure of a series of scandals within the last few months, is totally on the defensive and is demoralised.

The opposition armoury has been continuously reinforced with enough ammunition to attack the J. B. Patnaik ministry. The various scandals, coming in quick succession, have been a godsend for Biju Patnaik as they cropped by just after his non-communist unity, providing the united forum enough issues with which to stir

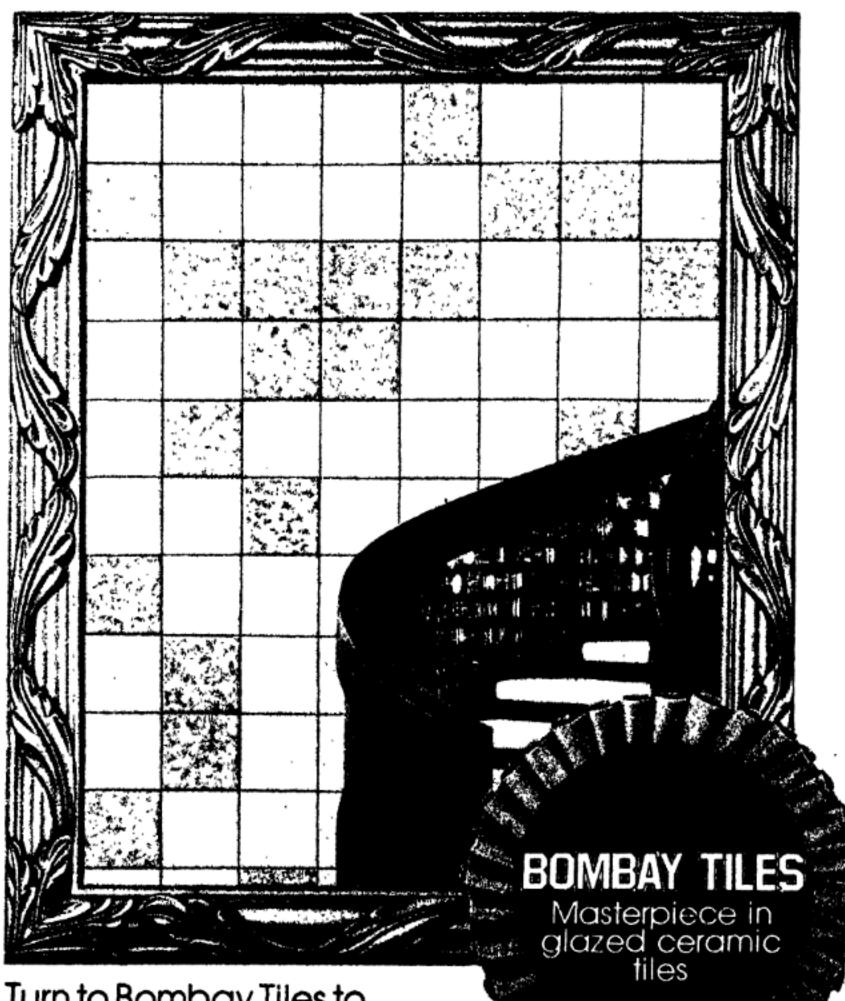
the public mind.

Inspired by the public response to his meetings, Biju Patnaik has decided to launch agitational programmes from this month at block and district levels leading ultimately to an Orissa bandh. Cooperation is also being sought from other opposition parties outside the Janata fold, like the CPI, CPI(M), BJP and also the non-INTUC trade unions, in order to broadbase the anti-government struggle. The impression that the Janata will win the next election in the state is also reflected in the brisk activities in the party office at Bhubaneswar, which, till a year ago, wore a desolate look. Aspiring candidates and those seeking favours throng the office all day, particularly when Biju Patnaik is there. There is already an undercurrent of rivalry bordering on infighting, not merely between the three consituents of the united party but also within the predominant Lok Dal segment.

The Janata section, comprising mainly the erstwhile socialists, and the Congress(S) faction, without a worthwhile cadre are suspicious about getting their due quota of these favours. They are disgruntled about the dominance of the young Lok Dal group led by Ashok Das and Srikanta Jena. Admittedly, this group is in the vanguard of the current anti-J. B. Patnaik movesthe result is, its hold on him is increasing. This has given rise to the feeling among other senior leaders that their position in the party may be getting eroded. The young Lok Dal group's dislike of these senior leaders, who, they say, have not shown dynamism while in power, is given vent to during the informal discussions of party affairs. Under the circumstances, a closeness is developing between the older Lok Dal leaders and their counterparts in the Janata and the Congress (S) factions.

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Magic windmill



A magic trick with a stick, a pin, and small, thin wooden or aluminium foils? It's possible and doesn't require much effort. All you have to do is make notches on a wooden stick as shown in the diagram, attach a small propeller cut from a thin, wooden strip or aluminium foil at the end of the stick with the help of a pin jammed into the stick. (The hollow should be a little bigger than the diameter of the pin, so that the pin is able to rotate in the hole). With another stick to stroke the notches, your magic windmill is redy.

Holding your forefinger on the far side of the notched stick and your thumb on the near side, run the stroking stick back and forth along the notches as shown in the diagram. As you are stroking, if you let your forefinger press against the notched stick, the propeller will turn in one direction. On loosening your forefinger and letting your thumb press

4 4 4 4 A

against the stick stroking the stick back and forth all the while, the propeller will turn in the opposite direction. You may find that the stroking stick is somewhat tilted in opposite directions in both the cases.

To puzzle your friends about the change of direction of spin, you can slyly shift from the forefinger to the thumb.

If you want something more spectacular, put four rotors on the stick as shown. You can repeat the feat as in the previous case.

This happens because of the vibrations generated in different directions when you change the pressure from the forefinger to the thumb and vice-versa, driving the propeller in different rotation phases.

Spot what's wrong





Can you make out what is wrong with this picture?

Bird calls and songs

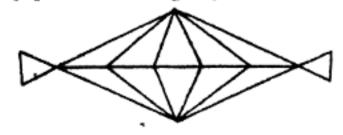
Your ears can play a key role in locating birds. To start with, a bird-watcher should learn to distinguish bird calls from songs. When a bird calls to others of its species—on finding food or sensing danger—it is usually a short, shrill sound. Sometimes birds of different species also take note of each other's warning calls and then warn away predators.

A song, on the other hand, is longer and melodious and can be mostly heard before or in the course of the breeding season—only the males of the song-bird species sing—and rarely in midsummer.

But if the Birds still remain elusive you can attract them with squeaking sounds made by kissing the back of your hand.

Figure this out

Draw the diagram shown below without lifting the pencil off the paper or retracing any line.



Solution



Do you know?

A study by Samuch Milham of the Washington state department of social and health services is cause for some alarm. On going through the death records of 438,000 males Milham has found that workers exposed to strong magnetic fields generated by electric currents have twice the chance of suffering from leukaemia. The dangers are more acute for aluminium workers, radio and TV repairmen, and movie projectionists, among others.

SCIENCE EVENTS

HOW did the dinosaurs disappear from the face of the earth? This question has intrigued scientists and laymen for over 150 years. Dr James Lovelock and Michael Allaby two renowned scientists, have come up with an explanation in their latest book, The Great Extinction. They think that dinosaurs were the victims of acid rain which devastated our planet about 70 million years ago. The acid rain was caused by a comet which entered the atmosphere.

DEEP Rover can take you right to the bottom of the sea. It's not just another submarine: you can drive it like a car—the controls are so simple that it will take you barely half a day to master them. This one-man craft is actually an underwater helicopter, designed by mechanical engineer Graham Hawkes and marine botanist Sylvia Earle of the California Academy of Sciences. Deep Rover is spherical-shaped, five feet wide and five inches thick. It has its propeller at the back, enabling it to move at twice the speed of any ordinary submarine, and even to hover in the sea—just like a helicopter.

THIS little tricycle is actually meant for handicapped people; but you too can have lots of fun with it. Though it looks very much like the common hand-operated cycle, it actually runs on solar energy. The tricycle has been developed by Central Electronics Limited, Uttar Pradesh. It is fitted with a 24-volt DC motor which is powered by a set of two 12-volt batteries. These batteries are, in turn, powered by a solar power pack which has been fitted on the tricycle in the form of the roof. It can attain a speed of eight kmph and can run for about 12 km a day. You can even pedal it by hand.

Masoodul Hug

The Name to Watch.

A new trend in time

RICOH

JAPAN





This Andia



MENDHAR: They work in Pakistan, but sleep in India. This is the fate of ten families in Balakot area for whom the election authorities have set up a polling booth within hand-shaking distance of the line of actual control. Their cultivation land lies in Pakistan while their houses are in India and the line of actual control passes right through the middle of their front yard. The families who are all registered Indian citizens have been given special permission by the Army authorities on both sides to cross the frontier at will. However, the produce that comes from their land goes to Pakistan—Statesman (Saurabh Tiwari, Varanasi)

AJMER: More than 10,000 child marriages were performed on 15 May in Rajasthan on the occasion of Akhateej, an auspicious day for marriages. An average of 50 to 60 marriages were performed in every village. Several parents had settled the marriage of their children months before their birth. Child brides and bridegrooms were seen sleeping on their parents' laps, unaware of what was going on. One important feature of the ceremony on this auspicious day is that the traditional pandit—the man usually present to perform the rites--is not called. An elderly man of the family or the village performs the rites—Telegraph (Pannalal Paul, Maibang)

BHOPAL: Modern Britannalas, eunuchs who number about 2,500 all over India, met at Raipur, Madhya Pradesh. It was a sort of get together and its leader, Munnibai, said they had no meetings, no agenda, no demands and no debates. Some time back a conference of eunuchs, held at Dewas, sent a telegram to the President suggesting that a eunuch be appointed Prime Minister. The reason: eunuchs

have no children who would misuse parental power to enrich themselves. At Raipur, the eunuchs from Madras, Bombay, Delhi, Nagpur, Bhopal, Jaipur and Ahmedabad organised two processions and offered chadar to Banjariwala Baba alias Sheikh Baba who died a few months back and had a following of people of all denominations. Following tradition they adopted a Raipur girl as "daughter of eunuchs" and gave her costly presents—Hindu (V. Viswanadhan, Calcutta).

HISSAR: After mock fires, mock raids. now it is mock robberies. The incident in which a local bank was robbed of Rs. 34,750 on 12 May was an "exercise" to test the alertness of the police, Mr V.N. Negi, senior superintendent of police said. The exercise was aimed at judging the efficiency and efficacy of the police communication system and gauging the preparedness of the bank authorities to meet this eventuality, he added. Four young constables in plainclothes were dressed up as robbers with pistols and guns without cartridges and ammunition. The police started serious investigations, little knowing that it was a fake robbery. The "robbers" were apprehended near Goodan village. A Haryana government spokesman in Chandigarh described the robbery reports as a cruel joke on the readers—Indian Express (K. Karamcheti, Tirupati).

RAJKOT: Prison authorities in Gujarat are in search of a hangman to execute the death sentence of one Shashikant Mali accused in a triplemurder case. In the absence of a professional hangman in the state the authorities have decided to approach Maharashtra as the date of execution is nearing. Presently lodged in a jail in Ahmedabad, Shashikant Mali, a factory worker, had stabbed three members of the family of a lawyer to death 'at Rajkot. He was sentenced to death by the sessions court and later the judgement was confirmed by the High Court and the Supreme Court. His mercy plea was also rejected by the President -Indian Express (K. N. Satyanarayana, Bangalore).

MUNGER: A group of girl examinees at a college centre went on a rampage and beat up three women teachers on invigilation duty for expelling one of the students adopting unfair means at the intermediate examination. The situation was brought under control after the police arrived. One of the teachers sustained bleeding injuries and her ear rings and nose pin were snatched away, police said. So far 40 hoys and the ten girls were expelled for using unfair means at the examinations in different centres of the district-Indian Nation (Satish Prasad, Munger).

Without Comment

Some people are for a weak centre. But the centre is the mother and father of the country and if it is weak, who will look after the little children (the states)...who will protect them if the nation is attacked?—Mrs Gandhi, on the Akali agitation

No power on earth will affect this friendship—Ramakrishna Hegde, Karnataka CM on the close cooperation among Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka

The only significance of the (Vijayawada) meeting was that we met for the first time—Jagjivan Ram

What was new about it (the Vijayawada conclave)? They (the opposition leaders) have always joined hands against us—Mrs Gandhi

What I would like to see at the national level is an all-party rule, not one party rule—NTR in The Week

Detecting real foreigners is a Herculean task. It is not a question of picking up an Englishman or a Negro! We're the same people, speaking the same language—S.C. Sinha, former Assam CM

The Communist Left in India first supported Nehru and then Indira Gandhi...the survival of the Communists depends upon a double protection—the protection of whoever rules Delhi and that of Moscow—J.D. Sethi in Indian Express

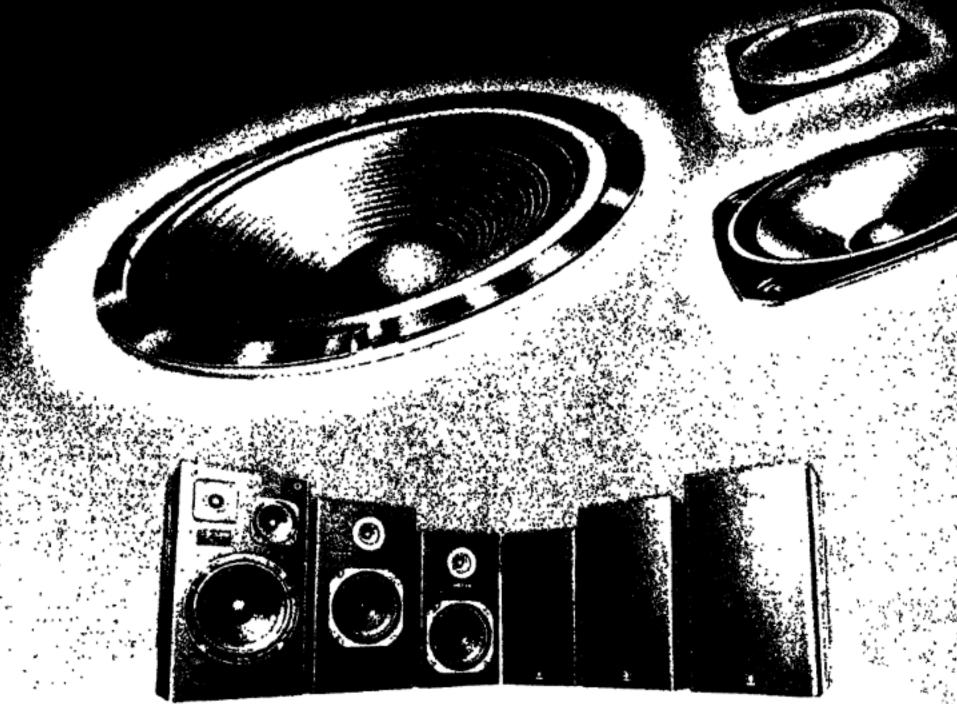
I don't trust politicians—they are liars. I am not a politician— Farooq Abdullah in *Indian Ex*press magazine

It is not your crisis, it is not my crisis—Pierre Mauroy, French PM, to a group of unemployed youths, on the international economic crisis



My one ambition is to win Wimbledon and that's the reason why I keep playing tennis—Vijay Amritraj in Weekend Review

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OTHE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTIO

Khaas Baat



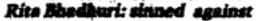
Deepti Naval: not worried

Il talk about Deepti A Naval having an affair with a Pakistani actor who had worked with her in a film called *Doosra Kinara* which was shot abroad, is "all nonsense" according to Deepti, "It is very painful to hear all these rumours. If there was atleast some element of truth in what I have heard. I would have reacted in a different way but what does one do when it is nothing but a figment of someone's imagination? That actor and me had a very very professional relationship. There is nothing more than that. I am tired of listening to all these wild speculations about my affairs with all these men who are just my friends. Am I not supposed to have male friends? And when will someone start talking about my career for a change?" asks Deepti, whose career is yet to take off.

oing a favour can cause a lot of trouble at times as Raj Babbar realised recently. His friend Rajeev Chowdhury, offered him the role of a psychotic killer rapist and pimp which was tailormade for Raj. Raj resisted for some time and then rejected the offer outright. Raicev however didn't start the film and didn't offer the role to any other actor. Six months later he talked to Raj again and he finally decided to do the role. Now every other filmmaker asks him to play a similar role.

Remember, Rita better actresses who walked out of the FTII and proved that she could deliver the goods. But the filmworld had its own ideas. Some producers tried to take advantage of her. One well known producer, she says, asked her to take off her bloose for a screen test. When she refused to do such 'screen' tests they spread stories about her and said she was acting too big and that it was very risky to take her as a leading lady. The more famous producers

offered her roles, but all they wanted her to play was the "sweet sob sister" who had nothing to do but sing a few songs and cry her heart out. Rita was not prepared to take such insults of talent and looked for better things to do and luckily found something. She switched over to Guiarati films and within no time became "the Hema **Malini of Gujarat". Win**ning awards, has became a habit. She still rules there but is dying to do some good Hindi films before she retires. Will Kahani **Phoolen Devi Ki be** that?







Smita Patil: no multistarrers

mita Patil is lying low Othese days. It is not that she is not acting. There are many films on the floors but Smita is going at a slow pace. She has realised that quantity really mars quality after some very bad experiences like Badle Ki Aag and Shakti and she has learnt her lessons the hard way. "No more multistarrers for me and no more films where I have to just stand around like a decorative piece. Yes, there was a time when I wanted to try everything. I wanted to prove that I could do any. thing. That phase is over now and I am very serious about my work. The films to come in the near future will prove that I am very serious," Smita says. She is trying her best to keep away from all romantic and other controversies. Gossip also has stopped affecting her.



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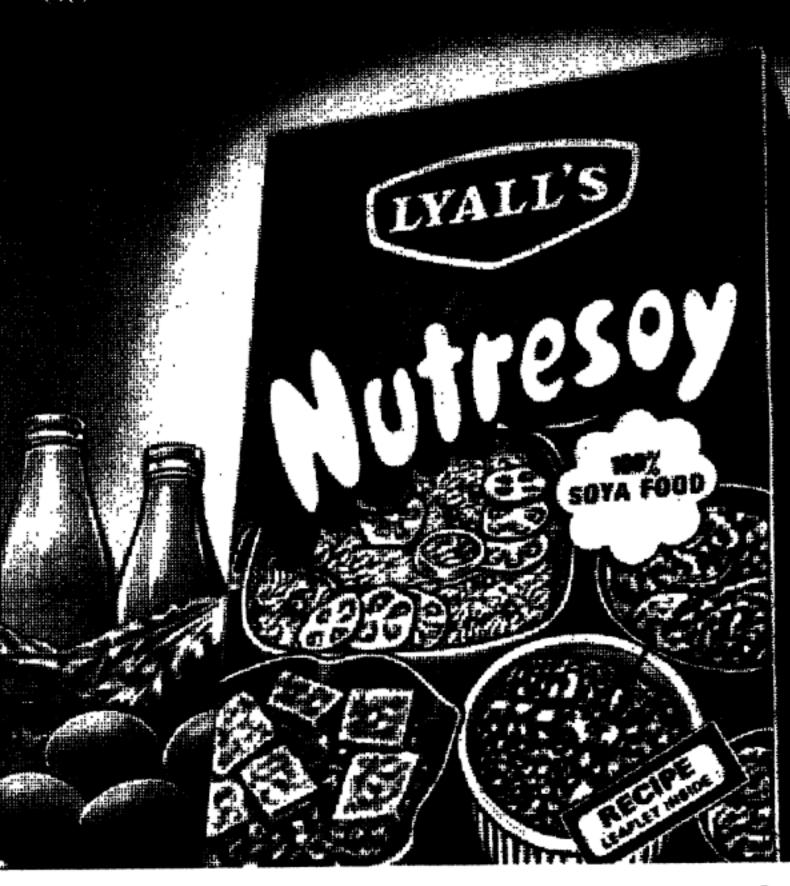




PIG FLIED TO SE DESTINATIONS DIN 4 CONTREDITS ARLI DHARI, AMELANA, AMSTERGAM, ATHORS, BANGKOK BAHRAIR BELING, BOMBAY CAIRD, CHITRAL. COLOMBO, COPENHAGEN, DAMABOUS, CHIRAN BELING, BOMBAY CAIRD, CHITRAL. COLOMBO, COPENHAGEN, DAMABOUS, CHIRAN BANGKOK BAHRAIR, BELING, BOMBAY CAIRD, CHITRAL. COLOMBO, COPENHAGEN, DAMABOUS, CHIRAN CHIRAN, COLOMBO, COPENHAGEN, DAMABOUS, CHITRAL COLOMBO, COPENHAGEN, DAMABOUS, CHIRAN, CH

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ARIES (15 April-14 May) This will be a generally -good week for you. Your children are likely to do well in their studies. You could prosper on other domestic fronts, as well as in social involvements. There may be a boost on the professional side; there might be financial gain. However, do not be extravagant and curb erratic impulses. Seek help from your seniors. Good dates: 12, 14 and 16.

Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 9. Favourable direction: South-east.

TAURUS (15 May-14 June) This week, your fortunes could take a turn for the better. There is scope for professional improvement in unexpected ways, involving a financial upswing. Pay attention to property matters. Professionals, a business tour may be in the offing lovers. This is a time for romance; at the same time handle matrimonial relationships discreetly.

Good dates: 13, 15 and 17. Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 6. Favourable direction: West.

GEMINI (15 June-14 July) This week is unfavourable Ofor taking unnecessary insks and gambling. Exercise courage and patience in coping with professional and domestic problems. Do not start any new business ventures. An enterprising spirit and good sense will help you. Keep your temper in control. Be circumspect and tactful in

Good dates: 16, 17 and 18. Lucky numbers: 5, 7 and 8. Favourable direction: North-west.

dealing with people.

CANCER (15 July-14 August) A happy and all-round busy week may lie ahead of you. Risks can be taken as long as you consult elders or those in authority. You may be lucky regarding legal suits or material matters particularly with the help from secret sources. The time is favourable for making desirable changes.

Good dates: 13, 16, and 17. Lucky numbers: 6, 7, and 9. Favourable direction: South.

LEO (15 August---14 September) There may be steady progress on the professionn at front leading to financial (Cun)gain this week. Employees could prove helpful and understanding. Businesamen, this is a good week for planning new investments. Professional singers may have a trip in store for them. On the other hand married couples may suffer rifts this week.

Good dates: 12, 14 and 15. Lucky numbers: 1, 2, and 5. Favourable direction: East.

> VIRGO (15 September—14 October) A busy and hectic week may lie ahead of you. Those appearing for examinations will do well.

Travellers, you may undertake a journey which you.postponed last year. Check extravagance. You may benefit through unexpected sources. You may not be tucky in love this week but at the same time women may help you unexpectedly.

Good dates: 12, 15 and 18. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 8. Favourable direction: West.

SWELIBRA (15 October-14 November) You may get. many opportunities for making useful changes this week which you must act

on. A sudden upturn of fortune may restore your confidence, but do not be over-optimistic. You may be involved in a love affair, in which case be circumspect. Be tolerant of your family members, especially old people.

Good dates: 14, 17 and 18. Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 5. Favourable direction: South-west.

> SCORPIO (15 November----14 December) This week will 11 be fairly favourable for matters of the heart; however, do not be deflated if affairs

do not proceed too smoothly. Conserve your energy and consolidate your gains. Do not make new business contracts and be discreet on the financial front.

Good dates: 13, 14 and 16, Lucky numbers: 2, 7 and 8. Favourable direction: North-east. SAGITTARIUS (15 December-

" MARKETONIAN ELLEN !!

14 January) This week the situation may not be as tavourable as it was in the POP last. However apart from a small loss, or friction with a relative, your prospects look good. Servicemen a good week is in store for you. Guard against deception, particularly in matters relating

intellectuals and artistes. Good dates: 12, 15 and 17. Lucky numbers: 1, 2 and 4. Favourable direction: East.

> CAPRICORN (15 January----14 February) This week is favourable for courtship 月and mamage. Young people will contribute to your

to love. The time is most favourable for

success. Energy and ambition could result in success but be careful not to overstrain yourself physically. You may make new friends, but be circumspect in dealing with elderly relatives. You may make a beneficial journey.

Good dates: 14, 17 and 18. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 9. Favourable direction: South-west.

AQUARIUS (15 February—14 March) This week This week could provide you with plenty of opportunities for pleasure. Though you may lose something of value to you, you need not worry about debts and lawsuits. Sportsmen, gamblers and speculators

may be in luck. Businessmen will suc-

ceed in collecting funds to finance new

ventures. Letters could bring good news. Good dates: 12, 13 and 14. Lucky numbers: 6, 7 and 8. Favourable direction: North.

PISCES (15 March-14 April) You may be financially successful this week. Secret sources could contribute to Your happiness and

prosperity. For those with domestic problems opposition from a female relative is likely and could result in some anxiety. Your intellectual and artistic pursuits may not make much headway this week.

Good dates: 16, 17 and 18. Lucky numbers: 1, 5 and 7. Favourable direction: South.

Those born on Saturdays: Those who are born on a Saturday are generally characterised by a persevering nature, and a pettifogging instinct may bring success in life. They are likely to have a gambler or speculator's winning streak. In later life they

tend to suffer from a common illness. They make friends easily, and are lucky in love and mantal affairs. They are generally fastidious and distrustful in nature. These defects may cause them to encounter setbacks and anxiety.



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|---|-------------|---|
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| 2 years and above but less than 3 years | 11 | |
| 3 years and above but less than 5 years | 12 | |
| 5 years and above | 13 | |
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A THE WAR SET SERVICE













Penrose (Black)



Bellin (White) to move

Game of the Month

For those seeking an opportunity to get off the beaten track at an early stage in the game, the Veresov System (1 P-Q4 and 2 N QB3) has always been one of White's more sensible options. Though not very common at international level it does have some bite as Tony Miles has shown from time to time over the past year

One of the major exponents of the

Veresov has been Russian grandmaster Lev Alburt in whose hands it used to be quite a potent weapon, but since defecting to the US he appears to have given it up. Perhaps his decision was prompted more by a desire to wipe the state clean than by any dissatisfaction with the opening itself.

Within our shores Robert Bellin is the Veresov specialist, which makes him the natural choice of author for Queen's Pawn Veresov System (Batsford, £5.95). Always a conscientious writer, Robert Bellin has clearly researched this book very thoroughly, as is evident from the clarity of his exposition Too many chess books confuse the reader precisely because the writer is not really clear in his own mind what he is trying to say

There is no better advertisement for the Veresov than the fine game won by Robert Bellin against former British Champion Dr Jonathan Penrose way back in 1974, a game which helped to establish Bellin's position in British chess.

White R Bellin Black Dr J Penrose British Championship 1974

1 P-Q4 2 N-QB3 P-Q4 N-KB3 P-KR3 3 B-N5 4 BxN KPxB P-83 5 P~K3 6 B-Q3 B--Q3 Q-B3 8 KN-K2

A normal Veresov set-up. White plans to castle long and advance his kingside pawns For his part, Black has no easily identifiable plan of action.

10 P-KN4 P-N5 12 P-KR4 P-N3 Preparing to meet P-N5 with . . . P-R4 and P-R5 with . . P-N4 keeping the lines closed.

13 KR-N1B-K2 14 P-N5! 8PxP Changing horses. His original plan 14. . P -KR4 15 N-N3 P-KB4 would meet with 16 BxP! PxB 17 NxBP with overwhelming threats.

15 P-R6! P-N5

An ingenious attempt to keep the kingside blocked, but not good enough. 16 RxP P-N4 17 R(4)-N1Q-R4 18 P-N3 N-B3

19 N-N3

Pinpointing the soft spot in Black's position. White will occupy the KB5 square B-N5 20 Q-N2 K-R1

21 B-B5 BxB 22 NxB 8--B1 24 PxP 23 P~KB4 N~K5 NxP 25 QR-81R-K5 26 R-B4 QR-K1

DIAGRAM

27 NxP! BxN 28 R-86 Decisive. On 28 R(5)-K3 29 RxB RxR 30 OxKt R-R2 31 Q-86+ mates. 29 RxB+ K-N2 28 . . . Q-Q1 31 Q-B1 RxKP 30 RxP P-B3 32 RxN PxR 33 R-N6+ Resigns. K-R1 34 Q-B7 only spite After 33 . checks remain. An instructive game.

MICHAEL STEAN

If you were setting a bidding competition and wanted to trap the partnerships, you might include the North-South hands below

| Dealer South N-S vulnerable | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| ♠ A Q 7 6 5 ♥ Q J | |
| ∳8 ♣J9542 | |
| 43 N 482 | |
| + A 6 5 W E J 9 7 4 2 | |
| ♠ K J 10 9 | |
| ∳ K Q 10 3 ♣ A 8 3 | |

There are five probable losers in spades (if you ignore the lie of the clubs), but predictably both teams in the final of the Spingold arrived at Four Spades. This was the bidding at the first table

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Kokish | Rubin | Nagy | Becker |
| 1 NT | No | 24 | No |
| 2♠ | No | 4. | No |
| No | No | | |

West led a trump. South won in dummy and advanced the singleton diamond 8, 2, Queen, Ace it looks as though West should have tried a heart now, but he led a second trump South discarded a heart on . K and followed with a low club to the 9 and King. The second heart was ruffed in dummy and now Kokish led a low club from dummy in preference to the Jack, which is normal with this combination. It may well be that, from the play of the low cards, he read the distribution correctly. At any rate, he landed a lucky contract

The bidding at the other table was:

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|-------|----------|--------|
| Sontag | Cohen | Weichsel | Molson |
| 1 ♦ | No | 1. | No |
| 2♠ | No | 3♣ | No |
| 4. | No | No | No |

With North the declarer, East led a diamond to the King and Ace. West returned a low heart to the Queen and Ace and now East, who could safely have returned a heart, tried the Queen of clubs. North won, drew trumps, discarded his second heart on . Q, and led a club to the 9 and King. No swing!

TERENCE REESE

Stamp



Brazil was one of the first countries to follow Britain in introducing adhesive postage stamps. Issued in 1843, the Brazilian stamps resembled Britain's Penny Blacks in being imperforate, printed in black and without the country's name in their designs in 1943, to mark the centenary of the first stamps. Brazil issued a special series reproducing, with minor additions, including the name of the country, the three Brazilian clesions of 1843.

C. W. HILL

- In Hindi and Bengali, it is known as methi What is it known as in English? What is the collective noun for a group. of larks?
- Name the national airline of Poland. In Australia, a certain man called "Mr. Fix It" (by trade unions) once drank two and a half pints of beer in 12 seconds. What is he now known as?
- Which Hindu god is known as the

Indian Bacchus?

Which country is called "the land of togetherness"?

7. Who is the Greek goddess of fire?

8. Who is a roirek?

What does "log rolling" mean?

10. Who were the novelists who wrote under the pseudonyms Bell, Acton, Currer and Elis?

11. What is a dorcas meeting?

make clothes for the poor. 11. A meeting of society of fadies to and Emily). The Bronte sisters (Charlotte, Anne admiring. in literary circles it means mutual

In politics, it is a 'give and take' policy; European immigrant in South Africa.

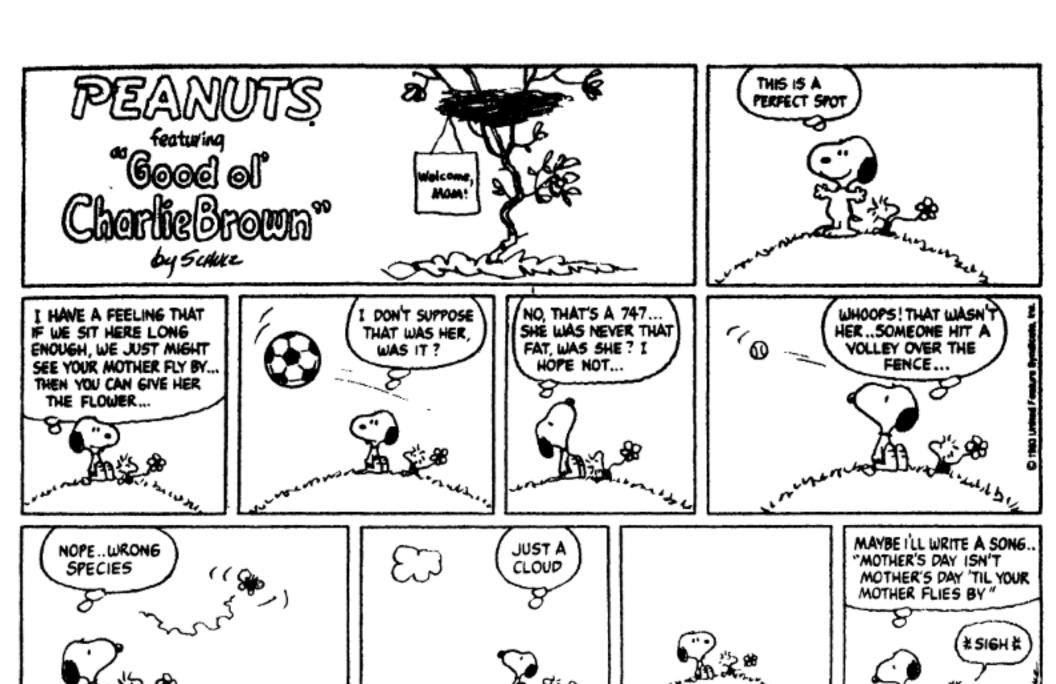
8. A newcomer, especially British or BUSSH 7

 Kenya. . Soma.

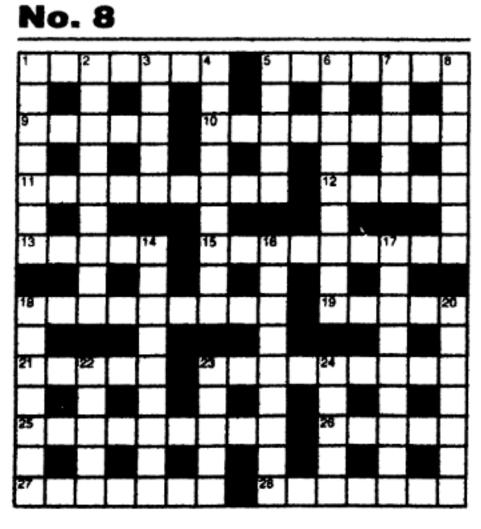
4. Bob Hawke, PM of Australia. .TOJ .E

2. Exeitation. 1. Fenugreek.

VN2MEH2



Sunday crossword



ACROSS

- Ram pelt roughly and tread on it. (7)
- The painter gets mixed up in the manuscript and results in killings. 9. Well-known poet sounds like the alternative before the lair! (5)
- 10. I scap itch roughly, but get a nut (9)
- 11. Toed goes right, and gets inside the prey. How grasping! (9)
- 12. Steer the wrong way but do be brief. (5)
- Se sealed again—to attempt to pass? (5)

- 15 The article precedes the particles—that is, goes south, and discovers bodies! (9)
- 18 Communists surrounds me 'ere getting involved; what saviours (9)
- 19. The supposition is in short streets, but sorts out. (5)
- 21 The container is inside the saint—how meagre (5)
- 23. Winning extremity? Just obtained directly. (5-4)
- 25. C. does Rome in a flurry, but manages to obtain a system of signals (5, 4)
- 26. Part of Elena I veer to see-how very childlike (5)
- 27. Blotted out, to allow within the will (7)
- 28 Do such helpings have to be consumed rapidly? (7)

DOWN

- 1 Pert rap for one with furry tastes (7)
- Publicity precedes garment, Ed-spoke directly to (9)
- 3. The cooking utensil with little father finds the animal (5)
- 4. Goes in a pen, loses direction and ends up spying (9)
- Do without a meal, sounds like--how dim! (5)
- Are these deeds committed again—or are they responses? (9)
- 7. Either I go, and reach the upper air (5)
- 8. Looks like these waterfalls like display. (7)
- 14. Turn to provide intended, I hear, but really a manner of dealing with. (9) 16 Donkey's before the woody plants and all get mixed up turning right; they
- do make positive statements! (9)
- 17 Lion, faint? What a mess, to get such a blowing-up! (9)
- 18 Again added, without the million, and continued. (7) 20. Dan's 'Ess in disguise, you know-good grief. (7)
- 22. Such a fool is one for only a day. (5)
- 23. Go left in the sustenance and produce an inundation. (5)
- 24. The coin gets mixed up with the capital of Thailand to get a pick-me-up (5).

Solutions to SUNDAY Crossword No. 7 129631

- 1 Drainage 9. Vanquish 10 Aped 11 Incarecerated 13 Pen nib 14 Scrabble 15. Refused 16 Fenders 20. Dalmatia 22. Taxing 23 Cairn terrier 25. Opal 26 Luckless 27. Thrashed
- Repreve 3. Indian summer 4 Amicable 5 Everest 6. Endear 7 Mint 8 Shudders 12. Ambidextrous 15. Radicals 17. Entailer 18. Renovate 19. Fairest 21. Titled 24. Inca

Compiled by Rita Tewari

A WILD GOOSE CHASE

THE intelligence bureau (IB) is sometimes made to do the donkey's work by the political bosses while it knows fully well that the subject under study is not important at all. Someone in the PM's secretariat decided that the son of a central minister, who has been educated abroad, was trying to emerge as a potent threat to Mr Rajiv Gandhi. The fact that this gentleman was a Muslim and had close links with Mr Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna further alarmed the political managers. So, the IB was directed to prepare a detailed dossier on this minister's son. While the person under study had no inkling of what was going on, his innocent, non-political, activities were studiously noted by the IB sleuths and a voluminous file prepared on him. The way the political managers around Rajiv Candhi dealt with the non-existent threat to his leadership, one was reminded of Don Quixote and his obsession for windmills.

BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP



Maneka: impressive debut

WITH her invitation to the Vijayawada meeting, Mrs Maneka Gandhi has made her debut in united, opposition politics with a bang. Indications are that her Rashtriya Sanjay Manch (RSM) is about to include in its ranks its first major politician — the former Bihar chief minister, Mr Abdul Ghafoor. The ex-CM has been meeting Mrs Maneka Gandhi very often these days. And if Mr Ghafoor were to join hands with her, political observers will not be very wrong when they say that Maneka has come of age at last.

THE SANYASI'S PROGRESS

DOES the Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Mr N.T. Rama Rao, have ambitions in the north as well? After the successful opposition conclave at Vijayawada, organised by the Telugu Desam, the saffronrobed NTR seems to be seriously focussing his attention on national politics. Some opposition leaders from the north are planning to organise a tour of NTR in the Hindispeaking states. There are plans too, to dub the NTR films, in which he plays the roles of Rama and Krishna, in Hindi and exhibit them in the north. If the plan materialises, the Congress (I)'s "divine headache" of the south may shift to the north as well.

WANTED: C.P.N. SINGH EXPOSED



C.P.N. Singh: scapegoat?

THE recent expose in press and Parliament on the goings-on in the Department of Electronics (DoE) has made some aides of the Prime Minister, who were affected by the exposures, sit up and plan out a strategy. They are gunning for Mr C.P.N. Singh, the former minister for electronics, who was dropped in the January cabinet resnuttie due to his differences with a powerful section of the bureaucracy which surrounds the PM. Mr C.P.N. Singh's days as the minister of state for defence had seen some exposes (mainly in SUNDAY) on some of the deals concluded in his time. Recently some senior newsmen were told by an aide of the PM that he was willing to help with file, documents, etcetera, if the newsmen were ready to do an expose on C.P.N. Singh, a la SUNDAY and The Telegraph's reports on the DoE concerning Mr V.S. Tripathy and Mr Ashok Parthasarathy. Let's keep our fingers crossed.



NTR: ambitious CM

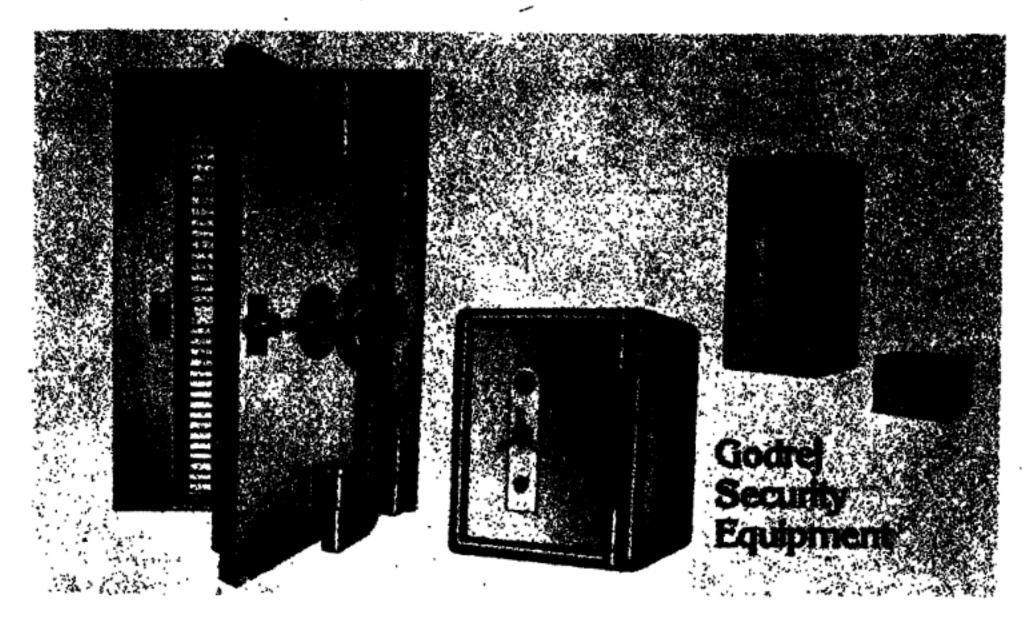
DEVILAL'S NOT-SO-MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION

THE Janata Party is paying special attention to building up its party organisation in western Uttar Pradesh, a region traditionally considered by the opposition parties to be the stronghold of the Lok Dal president, Chaudhury Charan Singh. The organisational charge has been given to Mr K.C. Tyagi, a former protege of the Chaudhury, who defected to the Janata fold last year. On 22 May, the first ever party workers' meeting in this region, was held at Ghaziabad. But the organisational finesse of Tyagi was washed away by the antics of Chaudhury Devi Lal of Harvana. As soon as he got up to speak, Devi Lal asked the audience how many of them were jats. When five or six jats were spotted, Devi Lal started addressing them and told them that while a small state like Haryana had 27 jat MLAs, UP had only seven. He blamed Chaudhury Charan Singh for this state of

TAILPIECE: Why do the Prime Minister and her son refer to the "foreign hand" so very often and blame it for all ills facing the country? The answer is simple. There are two foreign hands in the Prime Minister's house (after all a human being has two hands) and every morning Mrs Gandhi and Rajiv start their day after being offered breakfast by those hands. So, the whole day, they pick on one hand each and keep referring to it wherever they speak on national problems.

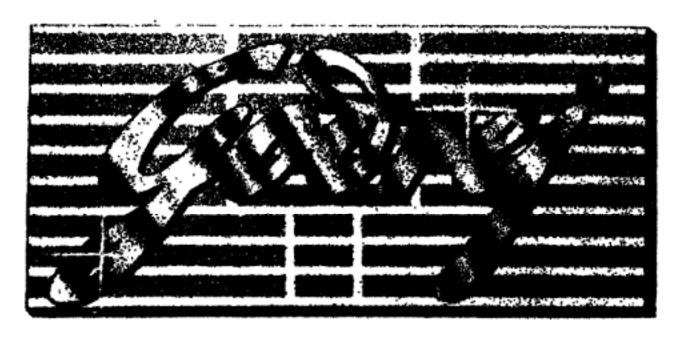
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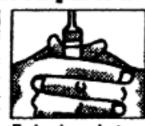
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- Purchase and sale of shares and debentures.







The fears were unfounded: Kashmir's chief minister and National Conference leader Dr Farooq Abdullah passed his first real political test since the death of his father, Sheikh Abdullah, when the National Conference defeated the Congress(I), which refused to have an electoral alliance with Dr Abdullah's party. This despite the bias displayed by the election commission when it stopped the counting of votes in 13 seats in the absence of any recommendations to do so from the state's chief electoral officer. A report on the National Conference victory and the controversial decision of the election commission by Udayan Sharma. Plus, an exclusive interview with Dr Farooq Abdullah.

For eight hours at a stretch, the 3,000-odd workers of Gwalior Rayon's staple fibre division in Nagda, are exposed to the most toxic of industrial gases on the shop-floor. Result: impotence, insomnia, lethargy, gastritis in the early stages and paralysis and cardiac diseases as advanced symptoms. V.T. Padmanabhan and Masoodul Huq investigate.



On 9 June, Andhra Pradesh's sanyasi chief minister N.T. Rama Rao completed six months in office. What has the Telugu Desam government achieved in this period? How seriously can NTR be taken as a leader? Ajay Kumar finds out. Page 38

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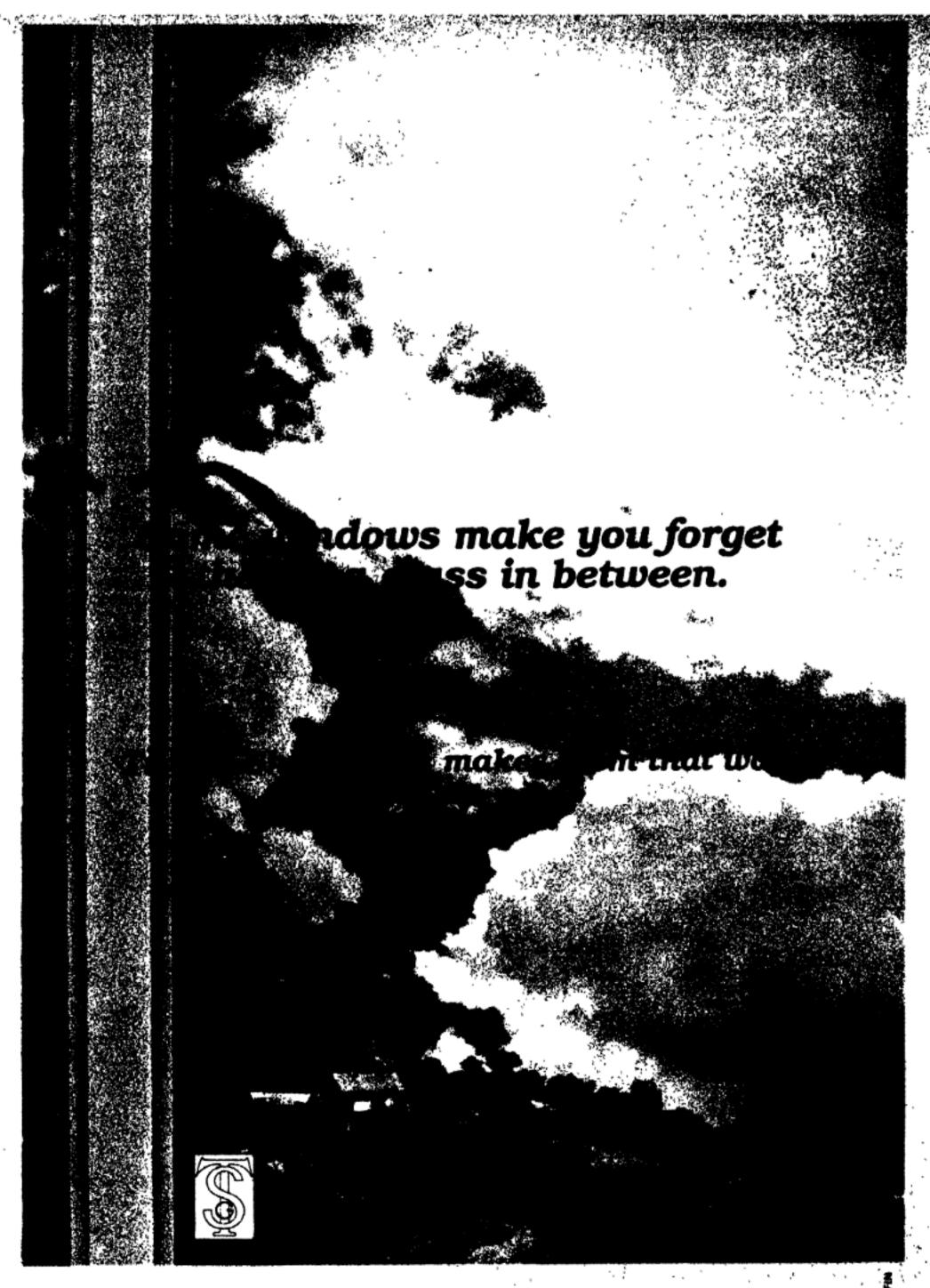
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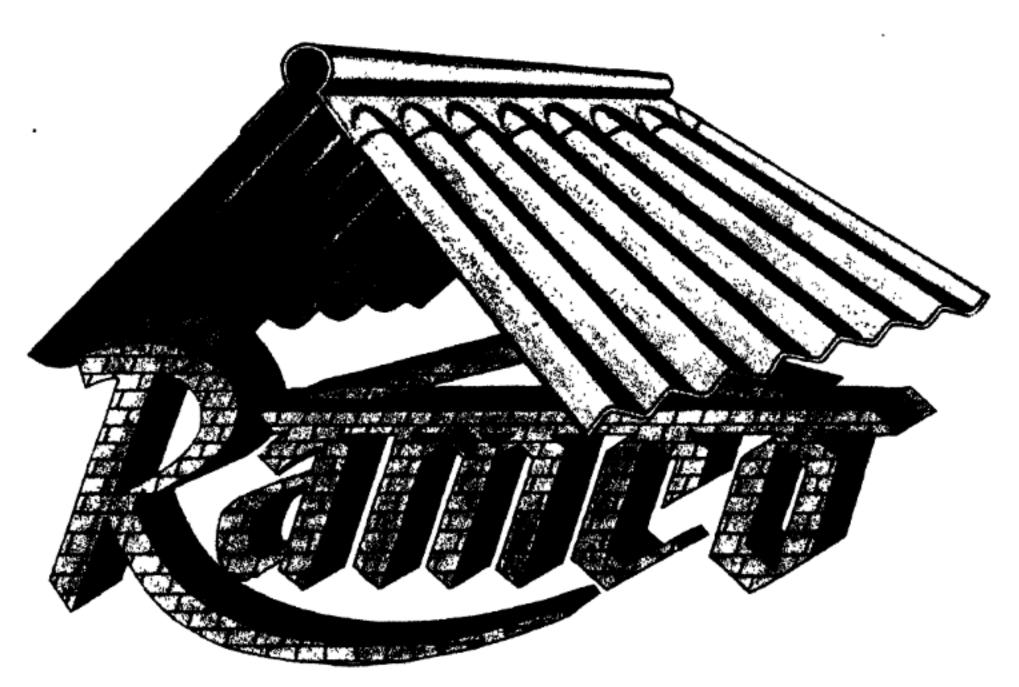
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Lt-Gen Sinha's brilliance was his undoing

he telephone rang at 11 am on 31 May in the room of Lt-Gen S.K. Sinha, vice-chief of the army staff, at the ministry of defence, South Block. General K.V. Krishna Rao, chief of the army staff, was on the line to tell him that the government had chosen his junior, Lt-Gen A.S. Vaidya, general officer command and ing-in-chief, eastern-command, as the next chief of the army.

Gen Sinha was, to say the least, surprised. He had an unblemished record and only once before had there been supersession of the seniormost in the appointment of chief of staff. But he kept his cool and told General Rao that he would be "putting in his papers."

"Why should you?" the chief asked.

Gen Sinha said that dignity demanded that he should. He would be losing Rs 40,000 by asking for premature retirement. (He could have encashed six months leave on full pay on normal retirement. On premature retirement he would be entitled to encash only two months' leave and the balance on half-pay).

Gen Sinha called in his stenogpher and dictated a cryptic plication: "May I request that I be relieved by I August because .I want to take leave preparatory to retirement." He also called Gen Vaidya to congratulate him and then went back to his work. He then called up his wife—he did not want her to get the news from anyone else. Only she and his younger daugher, graduating from Hindu College, Delhi, were at home. They were both shocked. So were his elder son, married to a Spanish girl and settled in Madrid, the elder daughter in New York, mother of two children, and the younger son also in New York, studying, when

they got the news.

Gen Sinha's 80-year-old father, who stays alone in Patna because he is doing social work with JP's men, did sound unhappy when told about the supersession on the phone. But he hurriedly added: "There must be a silver lining to this development." Probably, for Gen Sinha wants to go to his father after 1 August. "We have already begun packing," the retiring General told me.

I asked Gen Sinha if he had any suspicion that he would be passed over.Said he, "No. In fact, everyone took my promotion for granted." This must be true because the top officers I have talked to said that they had never expected this supersession. Gen Sinha, they said, was highly esteemed. And with reason. His grasp of military matters is proverbial and his book, Of Matters Military, is considered a classic. The late Sushital Banerjee, when he was defence secretary, used to tell Gen Sinha that he did not like many of the conclusions in the book but there was no other document which the government could confidently depend upon.

Gen Sinha in his book has outlined what the task of the border police should be and this is quite contrary to what the government has in view. Gen Sinha writes: "There is no requirement for the border police to be organised on all-India lines or indeed like the regular army. Their role is not to provide a first or second line of defence as such, but to carry out only police duties on our borders."

I feel that his very brilliance could have been his undoing. Ministers who constitute the cabinet subcommittee for appointment do not like too bright an officer who they fear might bring too much independence to the charge he assumes. Gen Sinha is not the only one who has been meted out this treatment. Lt-Gen P.S. Bhagat was forced to fade away and so were Lt-Gen Harbaksh Singh and Lt-Gen Kulwant Singh—all extraordinarily capable men.

It is true that the way in which the military had taken over power in Pakistan could provide the basis of some fears here about generals who might become overambitious. But India is not Pakistan. The democratic system is well-rooted and the military knows its place. It is also true that a General who chafes at civilian control can be a liäbility as President Truman found out: he had to dismiss General MacArthur. But the danger here is that politics may creep into the military and that commanders might seek to please those in power by saying or even doing what could bring them favours.

We have seen this happening to the bureaucracy. And now some military officers are getting into the habit of playing to the gallery. General Rao, the outgoing chief, did slip up a couple of times, speaking out of turn, but the criticism he evoked probably had a salutary effect on him. Lt-Gen Vaidya, the next chief, is not known for his discretion. Mr E.M.S. Namboodiripad, the CPI(M) secretary-general, had to take him to task when he seemed to be siding with the Congress(I) at the time of the last

elections in Tripura.

Gen Sinna may also have paid for his readiness to take up cudgels with top IAS men over pay and service conditions in the armed forces. During Charan Singh's caretaker government in 1979, when Gen Sinha explained once, for two hours, the rationale for more top jobs and better salaries in all the three services, Mr Nirmal Mukherjee, the then cabinet secretary, asked him why the armed forces had kept quiet for 30 years. Gen Sinha said that the armed forces were then either fighting wars or preparing for wars.

Mr C. Subramaniam, then defence minister, was so impressed with the reply that he told Gen Sinha: "General, you are in the wrong profession. You should have been in the Supreme Court." He probably was right. But now it is too late for Gen Sinha to change his career. However, he expects to write books after his retirement. "You know, I have been addressing universities. I was in Kurukshetra university the other day, telling the students about the three battles of Panipat," he told me when I asked him about his future plans. Whatever he does, his brilliance coupled with his modesty is bound to win him admirers—this time outside the army.

Retired Brigadier Rao. Busy Dr Bakshi. Trendy Mr Tandon. They all go different ways...

Retired Brigadier Rao

His 1960 model is still in fine fettle. Runs him to the Golf Club in the morning, to friends for a hand of bridge in the evening. In between, there's the occasional visit to the doctor and dropping Mrs Rao at her welfare meeting every Wednesday. His tyre? Like his car, it must be a faithful companion.



Busy Dr Bakshi

Always on the move. 7 am yoga classes; 8.15 am children to school; 8.30 am chamber; 10.30 am classes at the Medical College; 1 pm home for lunch; 2 pm visits to patients; 3.30 pm children from school; 5 pm chamber; 8 pm Club... and, of course, emergency calls anytime—day or night. And if you think Dr Bakshi works hard, just think about his car! His tyre? It's as



Trendy Mr Tandon

8-track stereo, bucket seats, real leather upholstery, wrap-around rear view mirror this car has it all. And whether it's driving Mr Tandon to his factory 40 km from the city or dropping his wife off at the charity premiere of the latest Shyam Benegal film, it spells just one thing... class. His tyre? The best of both style and performance.



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The SP Sport

Radial. The No.1—in style and performance.



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Do you beat your wife?

surprising number of husbands Ado so. In England it is estimated that as many as one out of every three husbands beat their wives. I am sure in India the incidence of wife-beating is higher. During my years at the Bar. I discovered another very disconcerting fact about bashed wives: no wife leaves her husband only because he beats her; she asks for separation or divorce when beating is accompanied with adultery, impotence or inability to feed and clothe her. Most wives were willing to return to their violence-prone husbands on the grounds that at least he cares enough about her to beat her

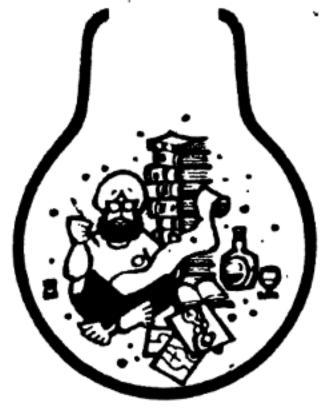
Very understandably wifebeating is more prevalent amongst the poor and the illiterate than amongst the affluent and educated. The three commonest cases of wifebeating are poverty, drink and sexual maladjustment. The slightly lower incidence of physical violence amongst the upper classes is due to the fact that they don't have to cope with poverty and find substitute partners in the event their marriages become sexual mesalliances. Educated women can also give their husbands as good as they get better than their illiterate sis-

ters. The phenomenon of marital violence has many dimensions. The first problem is to define violence. A doctor defines it as "any aggressive, hostile behaviour which falls outside the normal rough and tumble of marriage." This is very elusive as one husband's horseplay may be another husband's fisticuffs. A lawyer is of the opinion that amongst educated people, persistent intellectual bullying can amount to violence. A social worker takes the opposite view and is of the opinion that mere threat to use force should not be regarded as doing violence.

The main problem of marriage counsellors is to find ways of eliminating violence from marriages without breaking them up. Also remember that if you let yourself in as a peace-maker between a squabbling couple, you may soon find yourself hated by both.

On adopting a child

An Englishman I befriended at college married a woman much older than himself. After six or seven years they came to the conclusion that she was too old to conceive and since both wanted



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

children, they adopted an Indian boy. A few days after the adoption, the woman conceived and in due course gave birth to a bonny little boy. A year later she bore another child, a girl. I was told this is not uncommon: many a barren woman is known to have become fertile when her maternal instincts have been roused by artificial means such as cradling someone else's child

child. I was curious to find out whether the parents would discriminate between the adopted child and the two born of their own flesh, whether blood was thicker than water. Circumstances made the discrimination inevitable: the Indian child was dark, the other two fair. And since the parents believed in telling the adopted child its background, he began to feel like a second-class member of the family. No matter how much the couple assured him that he had been "chosen" by them whereas the other two had just happened, and no matter how much more they indulged the whims of their Indian child, he developed a chip on his shoulder. At school other children called him a "darkie" or "nigger." He became a drop-out and a drug addict. In sheer desperation the adoptive couple sent him back to India to see if discovering his real parents and his roots would assuage his anguish. He came to India but could find neither his real parents nor his roots. He came to see me a few times and then disappeared into thin air. I wonder if the couple had no children of their own or had adopted a white instead of a brown child it would have been any diffe-





Marx and Islam

The cover story, Zia, Islam and the gun (22 May), was thought-provoking. Mr Bhutto had made a great blunder by appointing Gen. Zia to head the army. In return the general wiped out Bhutto from the scene as he was considered an impediment in the way of Zia's ambitions. However, it is quite apparent by now that he is losing public sympathy and support and the day is not far when he will be removed. B. B. Bose, Jamshedpur

The cover story gave one the impression that Tariq Ali was trying to muster moral support for a future invasion of Pakistan by the Soviet Union. The extract read like a Marxist manifesto. It was also surprising to note the term Mr Ali uses to describe countries such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh—'bastard states.' I wonder why he left out India.

Md Salaudin, Barasat (West Bengal)

I failed to understand how the extract of a book by Tariq Ali could be the cover story of Sunday. In any case, the article is biased and full of baseless allegations. Has he any proof that the CIA was behind the ouster of Bhutto? As a Marxist, Tariq Ali can publish a book through a capitalist publisher (Penguin Books). He belongs to that brand of hypocrites who live in capitalist countries, and yet ring the deathknell of capitalist countries. How is it that there can never be similar freedom of opinion in Marxist countries? B. L. Saha, Dattapukur, 24 Parganas (West Bengal)

Gen. Zia is a devout Muslim and he has taken the right step to introduce Islamic measures in Pakistan. Tariq Ali's criticism of the regime was unfounded. M. Aniwar Ansari, Bhabua

Unfair deals?

Deals within a deal (22 May) made interesting reading. The controversy over non-resident investment in India was not very clear until School came out with the article. I only hope that the government will take necessary steps to thwart Swraj Paul's bid to take over well managed companies such as the DCM. Mr Paul has certainly used his political connections to see his deal through. But truth and honesty has prevailed once again. Suryakant Deshpande, Bombay

Congratulations to SUNDAY for treating at length yet another controversial topic. Swraj Paul has certainly disturbed the industial barons of India who believe in dynastic rule. Mr Paul's move will certainly help the Indian industry in the long run. Shri Narayan, Nawada

This has reference to the interview with Swraj Paul 'I have sowed the seeds of a revolution'. It is true that the relatives of many owners of industrial houses occupy important positions in their respective companies, but they are assisted by competent professionals. Instead of criticising the way Indian business houses are run, I would like to ask Mr Paul to glance back at his own companies. Does he leave everything to professionals?

N. Viswanathan, Calcutta

I fully agree with Swraj Paul that a change of attitude is necessary to initiate a much needed momentum in Indian industries. Mr Paul has put an end to corporate feudalism and started the concept of corporate democracy. Moreover, the government should stop supporting the industries run by families like the Goenkas and the Birlas. It is high time that the government encouraged professionalism in the Indian industrial sector.

Mr Firozul Haque, Malpara. (Orissa)

Swraj Paul deserves all credit for his courageous statement that a company belongs to its shareholders and not an individual. With the recent concessions granted by the central government, non-resident Indians have every right to purchase shares of a company in India like any other Indian. I do not for eseeany danger to the country if nonresidents invest their funds in India. The government has been taking numerous loans from various international financial institutions. Investment by non-residents will certainly help to reduce such borrowings at high interest rates. It is unfortunate that vested interests have raised such hue and cry over the matter. Deliberate attempts are being made to stop free and fair competition. M. L. Gupta, Jabalpur

Tooshar Pandit displays a marked

ignorance of the usages and laws pertaining to the sale and purchase of stocks and shares. He says that the delivery of shares listed as forward shares has to take place in 14 days and those of cash shares in three days. The fact is that any transaction made as forward transaction is not expected to be settled by the actual delivery of shares, but by payment of the price difference between the purchase price and the sale price. This payment takes place on the specified delivery days (every alternate Saturday). However, the purchaser need not sell the shares at all, but carry forward the transaction until a maximum of three months by paying interest.

The author also says that ... the Nandas....withdrew Escorts shares from the forward list. They are reported to have requested the stock exchange to do so, but it has not been granted to date Pankaj H Gupta, New Delhi

Tooshar Pandit replies: My article was not intended to be a handbook on stock exchange operations: such handbooks are published every year by all the stock exchanges in the country and sold at a price of around Rs 100 each. If I had to explain intricate stockmarket operations fully it would have taken pages (it runs to 24 printed pages in the latest official year book brought out by the Calcutta stock exchange). I gave a broad outline of the stockmarket operations so that the readers who are not conversant with them can follow the course of the takeover battle. Anyway for Mr Gupta's satisfaction the following is from The Calcutta Stock Exchange Year Book 1982.

"The bargains permissible in the stock exchange are usually of the following four kinds:

 For 'SPOT DELIVERY' i.e. delivery and payment on the same day or on the next day.

2. For 'HAND DELIVERY' i.e. delivery and payment within 14 days from the date of contract

 For 'CLEARING' i.e. clearance and settlement through the clearing house.

4. For 'SPECIAL DELIVERY' i.e. for delivery and payment within any time exceeding 14 days following the date of the contract.

It is true that forward trading in scrip was banned on 27 June, 1969. But trading has not actually stopped: the scrip which used to be listed before the ban for forward trading are now listed either under the forward list or the hand delivery while the rest of the scrips are registered in the cash list. The transactions in the stock market, of course, is not as simple as that: there were provisions for stretching the deadlines of both the payment and for the delivery of the share by paying penalties. But that was beyond the scope of my article.

Sheltering criminals?

I fully agree with Kuldip Nayar that The Golden Temple should not be misus ed (15 May). In India mosques and temples are usually used by anti-social elements to evade arrest. I do not see any reason as to why the Golden Temple authorities should prevent the police from entering the temple to arrest criminals. DIG Atwal's murder within the temple has proved that the sacred place is being misused. Sreemoy Ghosh, Jamshedpur

Kuldip Nayar's article was an eyeopener. It has been established beyond doubt that religious places are used to protect criminals. The devout Sikhs should allow the police to enter the Golden Temple so that the sanctity of the place is not tarnished. Geeta Sharma, Bhagalpur

Astrology vs science

The interview with Ramakrishna Sarathy ('There might be a midterm poll next year' 15 May) was absorbing. Astrology is based on science and cannot be condemned as baseless. Certain predictions go wrong since one is not able to furnish exact details such as the time of one's birth. Astrology has come a long way from what it was ages back. R. N. Roy, New Delhi

In this age of scientific innovations, the article on Mr Sarathy came as a surprise. It is absurd to claim that one can predict the future by reading lines on the palm or the face. Astrology makes one totally dependent on fate with the result that a person loses faith in himself. Astrology can at best be a pastime. It should not be taken too seriously.

C. J. Bose, Calcutta

Lies

ll that Ershad said in his interview Awith M. J. Akbar I am unlike a military dictator. I am not a vindictive man (1.7 May) is contrary to facts. If what he said ("We hardly censor the press") is true, then why should the nation have had to hear about the happenings on 13 and 14 February from foreign broadcasts? Then he says that "we sacrificed so much for this country, we were the people to first pick up arms..." No group or community has any right to say such things. It was the students and the youth who fought with courage instigated by patriotism.

Bobi, Dhaka

This has reference to Gen. Ershad's statement that the army men are democratically minded. Democracy only exists in theory in Bangladesh. In practice it is an autocratic state where most of the human freedoms have been taken away.

C. Rose, Arumanai (Tamil Nadu)

One track mind

All the Sikh extremists say their fight is against the centre, while all the time their agitation is sapping the vitality of the country. To say that the Punjabis alone are brave is a travesty of truth. An Andhra or an Oriya will make as good a soldier. It is only that, Punjab being strategically placed, has historically had to face attackers first. The way Bhindrawala and company are fighting the centre from the safety and sanctity of the Golden Temple, is ample evidence of their 'bravery.'

Harminder Singh Sandhu compares the kirpan to the sacred thread worn by the Hindus. But no Hindu has tried to strangulate the pilot with the sacred thread. Sant Bhindranwale speaks only of police atrocities in Punjab as though the police in other states go around

distributing sweets.

M. Shyam Sunder, Hyderabad

I agree with Tavleen Singh's view that it is high time the government said which points are negotiable. The infightings inside the Congress(I) has magnified the problem of Punjab beyond proportions. The government must try to evoke public opinion against criminals seeking refuge inside the Golden Temple. No law prohibits the entry of the police into temples. President's rule should be imposed to

tackle the grave situation. The opposition parties should be more responsible and should not try to make political capital out of it.

Ashis Mohapatra, Sibsagar, Assam

The special issue on Punjab has helped readers understand what is brewing in Punjab. Sant Bhindranwale maintains that a Sikh is an embodiment of clean thoughts. Perhaps he is not aware of the atrocities committed by the Sikh regiment in the north east and of the rape committed by five Sikh athletes in Bangalore some time back. I would like to remind him that planes cannot be hijacked with a sacred thread. He has shown that he has a one track mind. S. Chandrasekhar, Hyderabad

Tavleen Singh was biased. The demands of the Sikhs are just and they need a sympathetic understanding from all concerned. The heading of the piece was also misleading.

C. Nadarajan, Madras

I was indeed sorry to learn that the Sikhs are being misled by extremist leaders. Sunday did a commendable job by interviewing the leaders who are leading the present movement in Punjab.

Raj Gopal Ray, Bhadrak

Unanswered question

Amartya Sen, in his efforts to identify independent India's achievements and failures, has left the very question of his title, Can India conquer her weaknesses? (8-14 May issue) unanswered. His lenghty article ended up by saying, 'It is a weakness that is not being conquered'. Still I admire him for the thought-provoking analysis of the Indian system.

In India what is being experimented is capitalism mixed with socialism as Jawaharlal Nehru visualised and what his successors have been aimlessly following. Naturally, the economically advantageous section in the society with their narrow selfish interests will go on acting in a way detrimental to the interests of the weaker sections. India's elite used religion as an umbrella to suit their narrow selfish interests, and

to twist the otherwise perfect socialistic character of Hinduism. But, after independence, in fact they have been gifted with a still powerful umbrella political and economic power.

Under the reign of religion, society by and large had the advantage of overall discipline. Now, with the advent of politics, principles and moral values have all been reduced to slogans. If character is lost everything is lost. Therefore, I venture to give a negative answer to Sen's question. P. Chandrasekharan, Bombay

Prof. Sen analysed the problem but he failed to suggest solutions. It was not clear whether India will be able to conquer her weaknesses.

Bhaswati Banerjee, Trivandrum

Stinking

I would refer to Khushwant Singh's Sophisticated Brigandage. (15-21) May. It would have been more appropriate had this piece been written under the heading 'Situation wanted—an ex-editor for sale.' I am sure there must be a lot of takers at the moment for the likes of Khushwant Singh who can write so much garbage. I could strongly recommend him to those who would like to buy full time. The only person who could beat him would be Swaminathan S. Aiyar, but Mr Singh's case is more desperate and

hence deserves some consideration of compassionate grounds. Swraj Paul, London

If Khuswant Singh continues to write such stinking pieces like Indodo the name of his columns should be changed to 'Gossip Sour and Stinking'. C. Suryanarayana, Kurnool

I fail to understand why Sunday has to use the fused bulb insignia for Khushwant Singh's column.

Shams Nadeem, Kalipahari

FAROOQ DEFEATS MRS GANDHI

Kashmir's angry summer is not yet over with the elections which saw Dr Farooq Abdullah and his National Conference sweeping the polls. The tally till 10 June: National Conference, 44 seats and the Congress(I) 24 with five more results still to come in. This has been a crucial election for the sensitive border state of Jammu and Kashmir. SHUBHABRATA BHATTACHARYA analyses the outcome of this no-holds barred election in which the Congress(I) and the National Conference fought a bitter battle



olitics in the state of Jammu and Kashmir has now entered the Farooq Abdullah age. Till the election results were announced, there was speculation whether Dr Abdullah would be able to win enough seats to be able to form a government on his own. It was clear that the people of the state had given a mandate to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's son to start his own innings with a comfortable majority in the Assembly. The election results clearly show that Dr Farooq Abdullah has emerged as a leader who can rightfully be called the successor to the late Sher-e-Kashmir.

The Congress(I) propaganda machine, surprisingly aided and abetted by almost the entire national press, had forecast that Dr Abdullah was doomed. Sunday, however, in its cover story of 5 June had clearly hinted that the National Conference was going to be victorious. Not only has Dr Abdullah returned to power, but he has bettered the performance of the party since 1977, when his father was at the helm of affairs.

This election has indeed been an excellent beginning in the long distance journey he has embarked upon.

Though the National Conference has emerged victorious, the future of politics in the state is certainly overcast by the shadows of the acrimony generated during the elections between the Congress(I) and the National Conference, or more precisely, the central government and the government of Farooq Abdullah. In his victory, therefore, Dr Abdullah has to be more cautions than euphoric.

Within two days of the victory and before being sworn in, Dr Abdullah has given his party's traditional rival, Mirwaiz Maulavi Farooq of the Awami Action Committee (AAC), the honour of sharing a platform with the National Conference. This is the first dangerous fallout of the electoral battle. Of course it is always good to see traditional rivals bury the hatchet. But when the National Conference (known in the Valley as the Sher or lion), joins

hands after 50 years of rivalry with the Awami Action Committee (symbolised by the Bakra or goat), then some basic questions arise. The rivalry between Sheikh Abdullah and the late Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah, uncle of Maulavi Farooq, was not because of any personal animosity. It arose out of basic political questions-between the Sheikh's secular nationalist stance and Mirwaiz's sectarian stance which took him to Pakistan, where he became the 'president' of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and ultimately died in that country. Even during the poll campaign, while Dr Abdullah was shouting from the rooftops that the accession of the state to India was final, Mirwaiz Faroog was raising the plebiscite demand. The unity between the Sher and the Bakra is therefore, both strange and dangerous.

Sheikh Abdullah is respected not merely because he brought a chunk of land to India in 1947. He was one Muslim leader who did not rely on either the green flag or the crescent symbol to propagate his politics. Right from 1938, when the National

'Communalism is alien to our culture'

The Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq tells YUSUF JAMEEL

Q: What were your conditions in your support to the National Conference?

A: I did not support any party. However, I asked the people not to vote for the Congress(I) in the elections which has always tried to malign the Kashmiri leaders and made persistent moves to throw out Article 370 and decrease the special status of Kashmir. Even today, this party is making fresh moves in this regard. It is only the Indian National Congress which went back on its promise of holding a plebiscite in Kashmir. The Congress party conspired with the Maharajah and deputed certain leaders to merge Jammu and Kashmir with India without seeking the opinion of the people. The Congress cannot be acceptable to the Kashmiris at all and the election results have proved it correct.

Q: But has not your support caused a setback for the National Conference in the Jammu region?

A: In the 1977 election also, the people of Jammu did not vote for the National Conference. It was the Janata Party and others who bagged most of the seats in the region. The National Conference candidates had won seven seats earlier. This time too they have secured the

same number of seats (till the time of the interview). Moreover, Mrs Gandhi and other central Congress leaders tried to communalise the situation particularly in the Jammu region to grab the votes. Mrs Gandhi went to the extent of saying that the National Conference had entered into an alliance with pro-Pakistan forces and told the people of Jammu that voting for the National Conference would be dangerous for the security of the country. Thank God, she could not succeed in her design fully.

Q: You have said Kashmir is

Mirwaiz Farooq: against mistrust



disputed territory and the people of Kashmir be given the right to selfdetermination which had created apprehensions in the minds of many people. What did you actually mean?

A: What has been Kashmir's fate in the last 50 years? What have we gained or lost during this period? Have we registered any progress in any sphere? Did we achieve political or economic independence? My party—the Awami Action Committee (AAC)—believes that the political future of Jammu'and Kashmir is still unresolved as it was on 15 August 1947. The three parties involved are Kashmir, India and Pakistan. But the people of Kashmir are the principal party. No decision can be forced on them without their consent.

Q: Some unpleasant events took place during the elections. How do you react to this?

A: I, as the chairman of the AAC and as the Mirwaiz (chief preacher) strongly condemn violence, aggression, dissension, prejudices and mistrust. Communalism is a thing alien to our culture. We will shed the last drop of our blood in order to protect our minorities. That is the first and foremost of our obligation.

r Farooq Abdullah has won his first political test, though how much on his own and how much on the strength of sentiments for his dead father is a matter of debate. But, when he succeeded his father last year, there were many who were cynical about him. The main reason for the cynicism which often bordered on hostility in some sections, was that he strengthened Mrs Gandhi's case of dynastic succession. Dr Abdullah had to share the wrath of almost all democratically-minded persons. There are others who still hold Dr Abdullah's past against him since he had not taken any serious interest in politics earlier. Instead, he had the image of a playboy. But, now he has emerged as a serious politician, even though it may be conceded that he owes his victory largely to the love of the Kashmiri people for Sheikh Abdullah. The glory of his electoral success diminishes somewhat as he had to bend over backwards politically: the support he got from Mirwaiz Farooq,

the aged political foe of his father.

The victory is only the beginning of many more political tests which he will have to pass. Within his own party, his political adversary, his brother-in-law, Mr G.M. Shah, will be causing him enough problems. Shah has seven or eight of his men among the newly-elected legislators. Even during the election campaign, Mr Shah embarrassed Dr Abdullah by sending hoodlums against him in the Anantnag district. But Dr Abdullah acted promptly and he and his mother had to personally apologise for the incident. Thus the damage was undone. From outside he faces not a splintered opposition as in the past, but a unified and strong opposition which will have the implicit and, sometimes, explicit backing of the central government and Mrs Gandhi. It will be an aggressive and unprincipled opposition: it will be vociferous about any issue merely to promote its interest. One unfortunate aspect of the Kashmir elections is that it has been communal. There has been a Hindu-Muslim divide and to a lesser extent there has also been a Kashmir regional divide: the Valley has been solidly behind the National Conference and the Jammu region largely going with the Congress(I). An overwhelmingly Muslim ruling party faced an equally strong Hindu opposition. Mrs Indira Gandhi was in such a cynical frame of mind that she encouraged her partymen to articulate most blatantly both communal and regional passions.

What has to be watched is how Dr Abdullah reacts to these pinpricks.

The cub becomes a lion

By KEWAL VARMA

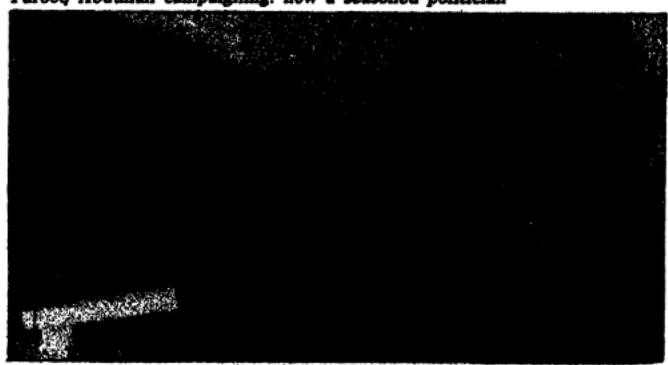
In the elections, Dr Abdullah underestimated his strength and overestimated Mrs Gandhi's challenge. He stooped to win. He compromised his political position when he embraced Mirwaiz Farooq without insisting that the latter discard the slogan of the plebiscite. Dr Abdullah's argument that even the Janata had an alliance with Mirwaiz in 1977 was not very convincing. Whereas the Janata with no following in the Valley was in no position to give respectability to Mirwaiz, Dr Abdullah could do so. In the context of Kashmir, the plebiscite slogan has strong communal connotations. Dr Abdullah embracing Mirwaiz made Mrs Gandhi's task of arousing Hindu communal feelings in the Jammu region easier.

Looking back in retrospect: there was no need for Dr Abdullah to seek Mirwaiz's support. Without it, he would perhaps have got two seats less in the Valley, but would have also got four additional seats in the Hindu-dominated areas of the Jammu region. Ultimately Dr Abdullah and the National Conference would have been a gainer by two seats. A majority of the Kashmiri Muslims are secular. But there are elements in the Valley which are rabidly communal. The combined strength of Mirwaiz, the Jammat-e-Islami, the Mahaza Azad, the People's Front and the Jammait-e-Tulba is not negligible. Mirwaiz can be a potential Bhindranwale of Kashmir. He can become an actual Bhindranwale, courtesy Dr Abdul-

lah. Such a phenomenon grows like Frankenstein, given the slight backing from a mass-based party. It is to be seen whether Dr Abdullah, like the Akali moderates, extends his hand to Mirwaiz to face Mrs Gandhi's challenge. Or will he stand firm on principles and dump Mirwaiz and his supporters politically. The elections have proved that Dr Abdullah has massive support in the Valley and he can defeat Mrs Gandhi without relying on the support of communal elements. The events in Punjab have shown that if a major party gives respectability to lunatics, it can cause problems. The ideas of the lunatics take hold and very soon force the ruling party to toe its line. Similarly, if Mrs Gandhi takes to the RSS line, she can play havoc. There is no question that Dr Abdullah is personally a very secular and modern man. But many such people have allowed themselves to be carried away by the drift. For instance, Mohd. Ali Jinnah was personally very secular. His personal dealings with Hindus were excellent. Similarly Iqbal who wrote that great poem, "Sare jahan se accha, Hindustan hamara." But both became victims—Jinnah later fathered a most bigoted state.

Dr Abdullah, by now, should understand that symbolic gestures like visiting religious places of other communities are no substitutes for truly secular politics. His visit to the Vaishno Devi temple did not bring him Hindu votes in Jammu. Similarly, Mrs Gandhi visited

Farooq Abdullah campaigning: now a seasoned politician



every Muslim shrine in the Valley which came on her way during her election campaign. This did not bring her Muslim votes. People tre-

ated these as stunts.

What Dr Farooq Abdullah does in the Valley has great relevance for the rest of the country. For the people of north India particularly, the Kashmir Valley occupies a special position. Mrs Gandhi is set on a course where she will have to play the roll of Jinnah in reverse. Earlier, she was subtle in exploiting. Hindu communal feelings. But as time passes, she is changing. This was evident in the election campaign in the Jammu region. If Dr Abdullah does not snap his ties with Mirwaiz, Mrs Gandhi will damn Dr Abdullah in the whole of the country. She is all set to go ahead and fight the next national elections on the basis of exaggerated fears of Akali communalism, Muslim communalism and the threat to the unity and integrity of the country. This will release forces of Hindu communalism. Mrs Gandhi's design can be and must be thwarted. It is here where people like Dr Abdullah can play a role. It may be recalled that this country is indebted to Sheikh Abdullah not because he brought a piece of land to India. If in 1947 in the crucial period of the country's history, had he not extended his support to Gandhi and Nehru, India perhaps would have become a Hindu Rashtriya. India's secularism has many weaknesses. But India is a unique case in the history of the world where even after the partition of the country on religious lines, the Muslims were not driven out. This is the essential strength of Indian secularism.

The argument that if Mrs Gandhi launches a communal offensive, Dr Abdullah perforce has to match her communalism and rely on all and sundry for survival, is a fallacy. Did not his father, Sheikh Abdullah, stand firm in 1947? In those dark days, even in the Indian National Congress, Sardar Patel and the others used to say that the Congress nad no option but to fall back on Hinduism to meet Jinnah's challenge. Fortunately, the Mahatma did not listen to Patel. If Dr Abdullah has to play a meaningful role at the national level he has to choose his political allies more carefully. For instance, he has been politically hobnobbing with the Akalis and Bhindranwale. This did add to the communal fears of Hindus in Jammu. In short, Dr Farooq Abdullah has to decide whether he has to be just another chief minister or play a lion's role on the national scene. He has the potentialities to be another Sheikh Abdullah.



The mazar of the late Sheikh Abdullah

Conference was formed, Sheikh Abdullah's flag was red in colour and his symbol was the plough-representing the aspirations of the common man. In 1947, when the Sheikh ensured the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India in the face of Pakistani aggression, he strengthened secular forces in the country. Till the day he died, the clarion call of Sheikh Abdullah "Sher-e-Kashmir ka kya irshad, Hindu Muslim Sikh ittehad" (The Sher-E-Kashmir's directive is to maintain harmony between Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs)-had ensured that this state, which has distinct Hindu and Muslim majority regions, be a shining example of communal harmony. The task before Dr Abdullah, therefore, is stupendous. By giving respectability to the traditional rivals of his party like Mirwaiz Farooq, he has made his task even more difficult.

The support from Mirwaiz Farooq in the elections may have helped the National Conference to enhance its victory margins in two constituencies in the Valley-Idgah and Zainakadal-but it cost Dr Abdullah at least five seats in Jammu. The National Conference's chances in Randhir Singh Pura, Baribramhna, Jammu Cantonment, Bishnah (where the finance minister, Babu Parmanand, lost) and Ramban were certainly marred by the sudden support extended to the party by the Awami

action committee.

What is being constantly harped upon by almost the entire national press is that the results show a polarisation of votes between Hindudominated Jammu, which has overwhelmingly voted for the Congres-s(I), and Muslim-dominated Kashmir Valley, which has remained the bastion of the National Conference. While it is true that the two regions of the state have voted for different parties, it would be wrong to generalise and say that while "Hindu" Jammu is with the Congress(I), "Muslim" Kashmir has gone the National Conference way. In Jammu, the national Conference has, for the first time, won a predominantly Hindu seat. A harijan candidate of the National

Conference, Mr Jagjivan Lal, has wrested the seat from the BJP leader, Rishi Kumar Kaushal, who had been winning this seat as a Jana Sangh candidate since 1952. The victory of a harijan from a general constituency on the National Conference ticket is certainly significant. The National Conference has, this time, polled 38 per cent of the total votes polled in the Jammu region. This is a marked improvement from the 11 per cent polled by it in 1977. Similarly, the percentage of votes polled by the Congress(I) in the Valley has vastly improved. Not only has the party managed to win the Shangus seat, but it has polled good votes in almost all the seats in Anantang district, though it lost the elections. Therefore, it would be incorrect to oversimplify the results and say that the state has been polarised into "Hindu" and "Muslim" regions.

Communalism will be the main threat to the state of Jammu and Kashmir in the post-election phase. Some of the speecnes made by the Congress(I) leaders during the elections were rabidly communal. Mrs Gandhi won the hearts of the traditional Jana Sangh voters by her anti-National Conference stance, where she pointed towards the border of Pakistan and warned the people of the dangers inherent in the National Conference's victory. Her tone in the Valley, of course, was different, but yet soothing to the ears of the communalists there. The behaviour of some of the senior central leaders during the campaign will also leave indelible spots in the political scenario of this sensitive border state. One central minister assaulted the district returning officer of Doda, who happened to be an IAS officer of the district magistrate's rank. This officer had to get seven stitches on his head. Another minister from the centre went to the office of a DIG of police in Srinagar and threw away a typewriter and told the officer, "This is not Pakistan, we will transfer you to Assam if you do not behave yourself". This sort of behaviour of central ministers was not classified as "poll violence" by the national press which carried concocted stories of violent incidents in the state, all specially manufactured by the propaganda machine of a particular party.

The overwhelming majority won by the National Conference has put Dr Farooq Abdullah in a commanding position. Since his rift with the Congress(I), he has been playing a major role on the national scene by participating in the opposition conclave in Vijayawada and offering to host a future meeting of the opposition in Srinagar. One hopes that Dr Abdullah will take his national role more seriously now. He has managed to step into his distinguished father's shoes with distinction. He has to prove himself a worthy successor of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

'If the Congress(I) does not behave, there will be bloodshed in Kashmir'

Doctor Farooq Abdullah tells UDAYAN SHARMA

He was looking relaxed and composed when I met him on the evening of 7 June. The results had started coming in that morning, and till two in the afternoon he had been very tense. The first indicators of the morning had given early news of a Congress(I) victory in Jammu, but by early afternoon it was equally obvious that the National Conference was scheduled for a devastating sweep in the Valley. The tension was over. Farooq Abdullah knew he had won the most difficult battle in his life.

Earlier that evening he had a long talk with Dr Karna Singh, the former ruler of the state and an old political adversary. But now he did not want to talk any more about politics. The only comment he made that evening was, "I am obliged to Mrs Indira Gandhi whose party has proved to be the most communal party. She has given me a stature which would have taken me a long while to get." He did not even want to say a word about his campaign. All he muttered was, "Thank God, it is all over. I must have a rest now." And then, on an impulse, he said, "Let us go for a walk instead of having interviews and discussing elections."



I have always said that centre-state relations should always be normal. If there is bitterness between state and centre my poor people will suffer. I don't want my people to suffer.

We went for the walk.

There were just five of us on the walk: three personal friends and two journalists. No policemen, no security, no one from his personal staff. He walked casually by the Dal Lake, greeting passers-by, chatting with the kids, hugging the shikarawallas who have a special love for him. There was the joy of victory in the air, but there were no pretensions in the victor. He was perhaps more lovable in his hour of glory than ever before.

But the talk inevitably tended to wander on the edges of the campaign. One of the areas was the awful misreporting which the major newspapers did about the election campaign. The bias of virtually every newspaper against the National Conference, the way in which the news agencies twisted and blew up stories was one of the sorriest realities of this campaign. I asked about the press which had reported that Kashmir was reeling under the wrath of violence indulged in by the National Conference supporters. He just smiled and said, "No comment. I shall just ignore them." But then he could not resist commenting. "I feel sorry for the newspapers," he said. "While returning from Vijayawada I **had met some important editors in** Delhi. I asked them to come and see with their own eyes that there was no blood and thunder during the campaigning." One report, for instance, had said that 300 persons had been injured at the Prime Minister's meeting on 3 June in Srinagar. But the fact was that only 29 were injured and none of them received serious injuries. And no one reported that only 7,000 people turned up for Mrs Gandhi's meeting on 3 June. The fight became a battle between the central government and the state government and the state party won only because the local people loved and adored their leader-----Doctor Farooq Abdullah, a man who talked and danced and sang with his people as one of them.

The only mistakes committed by Doctor Abdullah during the campaign was to accept Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq's support to his party. Everybody in the Valley asked the same question: Why did he accept the Maulvi's support in Srinagar

although he knew that it would cost him some seats in Jammu region and his party would not add even a single seat to the National Conference's tally in the Valley. On the other hand the Maulvi has unnecessarily shared the glory of the National Conference victory.

The interview was fixed for the morning of 9 June. Doctor Abdullah wanted to visit a temple at Habbakadal in Srinagar before the interview: this was an unscheduled visit. This temple had been allegedly desecrated by some hoodlums. Doctor Abdullah's visit to this temple lent a healing touch and a slap to Congress(I) politicians who unsuccessfully tried to prove that every Kashmiri Muslim is a secessionist and an antinational. Doctor Abdullah got a rousing reception from the local people who followed him in trucks, scooters and on feet. There was a stampede. He walked four kilometres accepting the greeting from all sections of the society. A graceful Doctor Abdullah started dancing when hundreds of youths asked him to join in. When I talked to him after the victory procession, Doctor Abdullah was a tired man. But he was relaxed and without



My personal relations with the Nehru family will continue to remain as before. As far as political relations are concerned, they will depend on how things go.

Doctor Sahab, after your spectacular victory in the elections, what will be your first priority?

A: My first priority will be to heal the wounds that have taken place in this election, particularly the communal hatred generated by one force or the other. I need to mend those fences—straightaway. I have to make the people of Jammu feel that they have done a tremendous jobalthough we did not get many seats from the Hindu belt, the votes they (the Hindus) have given us are in a massive majority...far more than what BJP got. I need to tell them that I greatly feel honoured and we will continue to do the good work started by my father.

Q: But Srinagar is not the relaxed city it was before these elections. I have not seen such bitterness in the city before. Why is it so now?

A: I think the election commission is responsible for this bitterness. If you remember well, there was no such bitterness in 1977. The election commission intentionally delayed counting and created havoc which generated great hatred. The people of Kashmir feel that the election commission is not a free body. It is directly under the control of the central government which can manoeuvre it to their advantage at any time.

Q: But there are a number of people from the Congress(I) and the People's Conference in the city and Baramallah who claim that they were not allowed to cast their votes.

Any comments?

A: I do not think this is true. Q:Are you satisfied with the re-

A: I think I would have wanted some more seats from Jammu and Kathna districts. But, I think the party has done well on the whole even after all the propaganda un-

leashed against us.

O: You have recently alleged that the Prime Minister was communalising politics in the state. Whether she was fully responsible or not is yet to be found out, but the fact remains that there has been an attempt to polarise the people on communal lines. How are you going to tackle

this situation?

A: Yes, I have said so. But to face this situation we-the Prime Minister's party as well as mine-have to work to build bridges immediately if we want to contain communal frenzy. India cannot survive if communal tensions continue to divide people.

Q: Just before the campaigning ended, a newspaper report quoted you saying that you would ask for the separation of the Jammu region from Kashmir if the Jammu region were to reject you at the polls. What do you say now?

A: This was Kuldip Nayar's interview. I think Kuldip Nayar is quite right. I have seen the results and the



My first priority will be to heal the wounds that have taken place in this election, particularly the communal hatred generated by one force or the other. I need to mend those fences—straightaway. I have to make the people of Jammu feel that they have

done a tremendous job-although we did not get many seats from the Hindu belt, the votes they (the Hindus) have given us are in a massive majority... far more than BJP

support they have given to us. Therefore, there is no justification in asking for the separation of Jammu.

Q: How would you consolidate your gains in Jammu region?

A: Work. As we have been doing before. By improving our party's performance in local elections and other things, for example, highlighting their problems and paying more attention through the government to them. We will work as hard as we can to make the people of Jammu feel that we are grateful for the support they have given us and we expect better support next time.

Q: According to some newspaper reports, Doctor Karna Singh before he went to the USA had asked his friends in Jammu to support the National Conference. Is it true?

A: I think Doctor Karna Singh is here and you should ask him. But Doctor Karna Singh has always been kind to me.

Q: Did you meet him?

A: Yes. We discussed the present situation.

Q: Did you not compromise your position by accepting Maulvi

Farooq's support?

A: No, I don't think so. Because I got support even from the Akali Dal, I got support from the Tableequl Islam here which is a religious body. It was not an alliance, it was just a

support as so many had given to me.

O: You have been a personal friend of Rajiv Gandhi. You canvassed for his party in the 1980 Lok Sabha elections and in the 1983 Delhi Municipal elections. He, during his electioneering in the state, alleged that you were indulging in communal politics. Would you still like to canvass for his party in the next elections?

A: This is a hypothetical question. I have nothing to comment on Mr Rajiv Gandhi's allegations. I can only say that my personal relations with the Nehru family will continue to remain as before. As far as political relations are concerned, they will depend on how things go.

Q: Congress(I) circles here claim that you will once again go to them in the name of family friendship and with a pretext of normalising centrestate relations. What is your com-

ment?

A: I have always said that centrestate relations should always be normal. If there is bitterness between state and centre my poor people will suffer. I don't want my people to suffer. But no state can compromise on basic issues. That I will not.

Q: Recently you said that the country must be saved from Mrs Indira Gandhi and there should be a national alternative to the Congress(1). How will you work to achieve this goal?

A: I think you are referring to my Vijayawada speech. What I meant is: what is necessary in India is a strong, united opposition for the betterment of democracy. If there is a strong opposition, the sort of things the election commission did in Kashmir can be challenged. That is why I want a strong, united opposition for the safety of democracy. If an opposition is united and strong, it can protect democratic values more than it is doing now. That was my intention. I went to Vijayawada with a desire to maintain the democratic institutions, the Supreme Court, the High Courts, the judiciary, the election commission—these should be free. There should be no domination by the government. Only then can our freedom be protected. That is what our forefathers had visualised. If the opposition is divided as it is now, and the centre as strong as it is now, the election commission will continue playing lots of tricks with us. The people of Kashmir have resented the election commission's partisan attitude. In Jammu, the Congress(I) has taken a majority of the seats. But they are objecting to our sweep in the Valley. Why? Because they are biased-with all the pulls and pressures from the central government. For the sake of democracy if they don't stop now, they are going to have a terrible bloodshed on their hands which they will not be able to control. Therefore, I warn

Why Dr Abdullah lost in Jammu

By HARPAL SINGH BEDI

he defeat of the ruling National Conference in the Hindu-dominated areas of Jammu is attributed to four major factors: the Resettlement Bill, lack of organisation and dedicated cadre, massive communal propaganda launched by the Congress(I) and the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, which in the final analysis turned the elections into a Jammu versus Kashmir issue and Dr Farooq Abdullah's alliance with Mirwaiz Maulana Farooq.

In the Jammu region any attack on the Congress(I) was turned into an attack on India. Thus the burning of the PCC(I) office in Srinagar was very subtly turned into a propaganda campaign that anti-India forces were active in Kashmir. The ruling party at the centre and the Bharativa Jana Sangh also exploited the fears regarding the Resettlement Bill with a whispering campaign that if this Bill were to be implemented then the people residing in Jammu would have to leave their houses because "there will be a massive Pakistani influx."

But inspite of all the propaganda, the Bharatiya Janata Party, could not cash in on it and was virtually destroyed at the hustings with at least 17 out of 25 candidates which it put up losing their security deposits. The party failed to win a single seat with its stalwarts like Chaman Lal Gupta, Rishi Kumar Kaushal, Shiv Charan Gupta and Thakur Baldev Singh losing to virtually non-entities. The Congress(I) emerged as a dominant "Hindu" party replacing the Rharativa Lanata Party

Bharatiya Janata Party.

The BJP was a house divided and the RSS element in the party was determined to teach a lesson to the "sarkari" candidates. The RSS hardcore was sore with Kaushal and Gupta because it considered them to be very soft towards Dr Abdullah. There were even allegations against Rishi Kumar Kaushal by his own partymen that he had received "favours" from the latechiet minister Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. Kushal came a poor third in Reasi, the seat which was won by a 31-yearold scheduled caste Jagjivan Lal of the National Conference.

The National Conference which at the start of the election campaign was hopeful of winning at least ten seats from the Hindu majority areas of Jammu could win only one seat, although the candidates picked up by the chief minister were above the charge of corruption and nepotism. Their defeat has been a big setback to the chief minister who was hoping to consolidate his position in Jammu

as well as in the party.

"We would have easily won five to ten seats in Hindu areas, if our party president Dr Abdullah had not entered into an alliance with Mirwaiz," said a senior National Conference leader in Jammu. "In trying to retain two seats in Srinagar, Abdullah lost five in the Jammu region," he added.

The Resettlement Bill was made into a big issue by the Congress(I) and the BJP. The National Conference did not have an effective organisation in Jammu to counter this propaganda. The party was totally dependent on the chief minister for its electioneering and his reported interview that he will seek separation of Kashmir from Jammu did considerable damage to the chances of his party's nominees. The party had great hopes of winning the Jammu Cantonment seats, Ranbirsingh Pura (where Sqd Leader R. S. Chib was its nominee), Ramban (where P. N. Raju contested), Bari Bramnah (SC reserved seat, Mrs Gurbachan Kumari was the party's candidate) and Bishnah from where finance minister Babu Parmanand contested. "All these seats we would have won but for the malicious and communal propaganda unleashed against us, by the Congress(I)," said one party functionary.

The communal frenzy which was let loose during the election turned into Hindu vs Muslim and Jammu vs Kashmir issues. The Congress(I) put the Bharatiya Janata Party into shame by indulging in communal propaganda. In Bhaderwah (reserved seat), for example, the BJP did not put up any candidate. The Congress(I) did put up Hari Lal Hakashi, a prominent Hindu leader who was also supported by the BJP.

Most Hindus voted for the Congress(I) because somehow the feeling spread (that too very effectively by word of mouth) that their interests were safe in the hands of the Congress(I). The BJP was projected as a divided house whose state leadership had been sold to the National Conference while the National Conference was dubbed as a Muslim and an anti-Dogra party. This had a tremendous effect and the BJP was

totally destroyed in the region. This for a party which was hoping to emerge as a strong opposition group. Said a BJP leader, "We were stabbed in the BCC."

in the back by the RSS."

This also proved that the BJP minus the RSS is nothing and cannot fight elections on its own. But the most sordid part of the whole affair was that although the BJP launched a vicious propaganda against the Kashmiri rulers, the Congress(I) took advantage of it: the party's pamphlet, which listed the grievances of the people of the region, bear witness to this. "When you have the Congress(I) acting as the BJP, why should one vote for the BJP," was the common refrain heard in the region. And this proved correct when one sees the results. The divide between the two provinces was complete.

The media played a very dubious role in the elections While every speech of the Prime Minister delivered during her campaigning, was reported faithfully by AIR and TV, those delivered by Dr Abdullah were ignored totally. Dr Abdullah's speech on the Parade Ground at Jammu made late at night, a few days before the polls, was heard by at least 25,000 people but it was ignored by the media. Most of the observers feel that if the media had been faithful the National Conference would have done better at the

hustings.

In the speech, Dr Abdullah refuted, point by point, the allegations made by the Congress(I) and the BJP. He said the Resettlement Bill cannot be implemented till the Supreme Court gives its decision. He also said that Article 370 was added in the Constitution at the instance of the late Maharaja Hari Singh.

All this was partially blacked out. The exaggerated reports of violence in the Valley also created an impact on the minds of the people in the region. The net result was: polarisation on the communal lines. It had its backlash in the Muslim-dominated areas of Jammu where a majority of the seats went to the National Conference although several of the National Conference candidates were charged with corruption and nepotism and were very unpopular. They simply won because the Muslims voted for the National Conference just as the Hindus voted for the Congress(I).

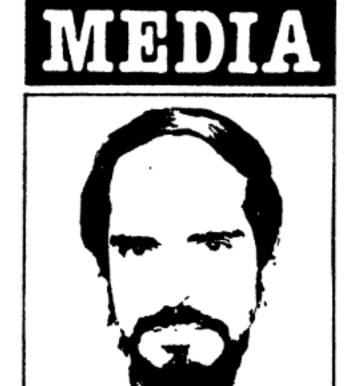
Eyeing the east

ritain's latest TV channel—Channel Four, as it is
literally known—has not
exactly set the Thames on
fire. It's a commercial
channel, managed by London
Weekend Television, and in return
for its charter from the British
state, is forced to have a certain
amount of "community" representation on the screen. In effect,
this means two main programmes:
Black on Black for people from the
Caribbean and Eastern Eye for
Asians.

The service has been running for over six months and the reactions to the two programmes are very mixed. To begin with, many people object to the very sub-division of Britain's racial minorities into black and brown cultural groups on TV. They see this as defeating the objective of making these minorities view themselves as part of the same historical process, albeit with social and cultural differences, which brought them both to the island. Divide and rule, all over again!

At the same time, the specifics of these cultures can easily get blurred, if not dissolved outright, if a TV programme starts out with the premise that they are to be treated as a homogenous whole. Farrukh Dhondy, the Indian writer who lives in Britain (his fifth book, Trip Trap has recently been published), points to one important, though obvious, schism between the two communities. The West Indians have a common language, English, and it has remained with them in Britain, undergoing continuous change and adaptation. By contrast, the East Indians have brought not only their main tongues Hindi and Urdu, but also local dialects like Sylheti. Dhondy himself has caused some eyebrows to be raised by writing a popular series called No Problems for Black on Black; his short skit with a character known as Roots continues on the programme, which alternates with Eastern Eye every fortnight.

During the fortnight i spent recently in London, I managed to see part of both programmes, as well as the end of a long documentary, also on Channel Four, called The Wise Man and the Spinning Wheel. This was presumably made with an eye to the resurgence of Gandhiana and all the euphoria surrounding Attenborough's film. In the best traditions of TV journalism, it sought to knock some of this by pointing to the continuing poverty in and around Ahmedabad, "Gandy's" home state. It depicted the problem of unemployment despite the mod-



DARRYL D'MONTE

ern mills in the city, and the mirage that khadi represented. But it also had the arrogance that Westerners eyeing the orient possess: hoping to sum up the situation in a few minutes, relying on repeated contrasts between affluence and deprivation, with a glib commentary thrown in for good measure. The failure of the film, made by James Bellini, was that it tried to hold Gandhi responsible for all the ills that India faces.

The first part of Eastern Eye, on the other hand, dealt fairly and squarely with a dilemma that Easterners in one suburb of London (Brent, near Wembley) had to confront—attacks from skinheads and other racist youth. It was presented by a debonair and self-assured Samir Shah, who is the regular on the programme, and had members of the community talking about the kind of harassment they had to face. The interviewers were also Asians and this obviously prompted even women to face the cameras confidently. I'm sure that whatever its compromises and contradictions, this face-to-face encounter with the British media for the first time gives Asian viewers a tremendous sense of identification.

The producer put together a spectrum of views on what to do about the attacks—not from the usual British liberals and representatives of what's been described as the race relations "industry" but from members of the community themselves. Thus there was the dogoder who thought that private prosecutions might be the answer, where the police were unwilling (or unable, in the event of the victims' reluctance to complain) to book the

offenders. Youth organisations made no secret of the fact that they were organising vigilante squads, which could be seen (members were shown in silhouette, so as to remain unidentified) going around homes, asking if everything was all right. A spokesperson of one of these groups spoke disparagingly of "coconuts"-Asians who were brown outside but white within their skins! Tellingly, the attacks had ceased wherever vigilantes had been organised. One person even said: "Now the whole community has become a vigilante group."

Several Indians I met in London were very disparaging about Eastern Eye. One referred to the "Indipop" it was peddling: how so and so was designing kurtas and adapting designs for swinging London; how video piracy was spelling the doom of Hindi films in the city and soap operas of the Asian kind. She recalled how Rekha was interviewed in. London and the actress had to pull up the interviewer for mispronouncing Hindi names of films. "Just because you live in Britain doesn't give you the right to forget your culture," Rekha sternly admonished the interviewer. Along with Samir Shah, the star of the show is a girl of Sinhalese descent, Shyama Perera, who charms many viewers and outrages the more traditional by appearing not just in British clothes but timed hair (to match the dress she wears on the programme). She had talked to Shashi Kapoor on the box, in her flippant sort of way, and it was reported to be "pure rubbish."

Occasionally, even the detractors admit that something good creeps in. They all recall how a teacher of Goan descent in London ("something Fernandes") was called in to describe his experience in teaching young British police cadets about Asian culture. He unearthed their undiluted racism, which came as a shock to all those viewers who fondly imagined that would-be British bobbies were above that kind of things. Anand Patwardhan's two documentaries (A Time To Rise, about fruit-pickers of Indian origin in Canada and Prisoners of Conscience, about the detention of political prisoners in India), were also cited as redeeming features.

Dhondy, after the success of his West Indian character series, has been approached to write programmes for the Fourth Channel on Asians. He points to the difficulty of choosing any one language or culture group and stresses how such programmes will have to deal with the problem through situation, not syntax.

Arun Shourie is biased

Last week Arun Shourie wrote exonerating the RSS or Hindu communalists from the massacres in Assam. In this piece, KEWAL VARMA exposes the inaccuracies and fallacies in Arun Shourie's report.

r Arun Shourie has been eloquent about many things but strangely silent over the role of communal elements in the Assam massacre. In fact, in his article last week, he has a made a positive assertion that communalists are totally free from any blame. "What caused the Assam massacres? Politics, not communalism or the foreign hand," says Arun Shourie. It is a strange statement to make, to say the least. To begin with, the statement assumes that communalism is not politics. Communalism is

police officer of Jagi Road. For Mr Shourie's information, this police officer is an Assamese Hindu. The point which should be understood is that in a situation of the kind which prevailed in Assam, the administration, like other sections of society, gets split on ethnic and communal lines.

r Arun Shourie says that what Mprovoked the Lalung tribe to launch a spree of killings was an incident in which the Nellie villagers kidnapped four young tribal women and killed six of their children. But

Bengalis? Is any proof needed? The AASU lost even elementary human compassion: even after so much blood was shed it passed a resolution that those Bengalis who had gone to the neighbouring state, of West Bengal would not be allowed to return.

Was it not Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee who provided the incitement when at a public meeting at Jorhat he said: "If in Punjab any foreigner comes then within 12 hours he will either be in jail or people will cut him to pieces and throw away his dead body." In the case of Mr Vajpayee, often his oratory gets the

> better of him. In Assam he was virtually translating into poetic Hindi Enoch Powell's infamous sentence that the country would see the "rivers of blood" of immigrants. Is it not the limit of a lack of human compassion that the RSS mouthpiece Organiser reported with glee that when Mrs Indira

Gandhi requested Mrs Rukmini Arundale to arrange the adoption of 500 orphan Assamese girls, Mrs Rukmini Arundale replied that she would adopt only Hindu girls?

The Congress(I) was also not lagging behind in inciting people to resort to violence. Mr A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhary repeatedly said at meetings that "I tell my people in West Bengal that if the Marxists kill one of ours, kill two of theirs." It was, indeed, a mad race between the Congress(I) and the opposition to spread hatred and poison among sections of people, just to carve out small support bases for themselves. Mrs Indira Gandhi also opted for the elections not because she was motivated by the great principle of upholding Constitutional obligations: if it was so, one would have, perhaps, treated the Assam tragedy as the result of an error of judgment made in good faith. She ordered the elections because she was assured that she would be able to instal her own government. In her cynical frame of mind, she chose to ignore the cost, in human and social terms, of the elec-

country. Was it not Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee who provided Mr Shourie later makes it clear the incitement when in a public meeting at Jorhat he that what he presaid: "If in Punjab any foreigner comes then in 12 cisely wants to free from all hours he will either be in jail or people will cut him blame is "Hindu to pieces and throw away his dead body"?...Mr communalism" or Vajpayee aggravated Hindu-Muslim distrust when he said that there were reports that razakars were being dropped from helicopters with sophisticated weapons to kill indigenous people (Assam Tribune, 9 March).

the RSS. He says that at Nellie both Bengali Muslims and Bengali Hindus were killed indiscriminately. This is factually wrong. Hardly any Ben-

big politics in this

gali Hindus were killed. Just near Nellie, at Amsoi reserve forest, there are a number of shops of Bengali Hindus. They were not touched. Eyewitness accounts say that when the killers were attacking Nellie Muslim villagers, they were shouting: "Kill the Muslims." As for the RSS, its shakhas in the Nowgong districts increased considerably and its chief instructor, Sudershan, was known to be active among the Lalung tribals.

Mr Shourse says that Zahiruddin, the local police officer sent a warning about the impending killings to the commandant of the Assam police, Mr N.A. Kabir. He rubs in the point that Kabir is a second generation Bengali Muslim immigrant. Was he under the influence of some Hindu communalist that he did not act on the message, Mr Shourie asks sarcastically. However, if Mr Shourie had made further enquiries, he would have learnt that the message could not reach Kabir in time as he was on duty in the interior. The officer who was supposed to act in his absence was the sub-divisional 26

this is one of those unconfirmed and exaggerated rumours which becomes the apparent cause of any communal riot. Even if, for argument's sake, it is accepted that such an incident took place, can human intelligence accept that it would lead to a retaliation in which about 1,500 people would be killed? Such reprehensible incidents take place at many places but these do not lead to a retaliation of such a magnitude. Obviously some other factors were operating. The job of investigative journalism is not to pick up some material and argue like a petty pleader in a mofussil court. Investigative journalism requires analysis on the basis of facts and the material, social, political and administrative factors which lead to such tragic incidents.

The real social criminals are those leaders and forces which fill people with so much hatred and poison that adults start killing even children and women. I hope Mr Shourie has seen the pictures of the dead. Whose sins have those innocent children paid for? Was it not the AASU which built up the hysteria against videshis i.e.

tions. But Mrs Gandhi's decision did not give a licence to others to incite

to kill.

I may add that the day the Assam elections were announced I met a top opposition leader, who was playing a leading role in the Assam negotiations, in the lounge of Bombay airport. With folded hands, I requested him: "Sir, Mrs Gandhi has committed a blunder. Please don't compound it by actively campaigning against the elections. In the emotionally surcharged situation of Assam this could aggravate the situation." Obviously, he did not pay heed to such pleas. The Left parties, too did not cover themselves with glory. Their primary concern in Assam was to retain their base, especially among the Bengali Hindus. Instead of healing the open wounds, the Leftists did not even try to build bridges among the warring ethnic

As for the role of the administration: the process of its collapse had started with the start of the agitation. It had started getting split on ethnic and communal lines under the impact of the agitation. For instance, E.S. Parthasarathy, commissioner, Upper Assam division, Jorhat (he died in a bomb explosion; the bomb was planted under his office chair), in a confidential letter D.O. No. CUA/CON. 67/80/128, dated 30 March, 1981, to the chief secretary,

"Even though we have succeeded in correcting by and large the attitude of our executive and police officers, we could not for obvious reasons bring about a change in the attitude of judicial officers over whom we have no control. The conduct of Shri R.N. Deb, judicial magistrate, Tinsukia, has come to my notice a number of times in the past. This officer seems to lack totally any sense of objectivity and fairplay and is guided mostly by emotional and chauvinistic consideration. I am enclosing a copy of the letter addressed by the deputy commissioner and the subdivisional officer which explains in detail the conduct of this judicial

magistrate.

"When I visited Tinsukia during the trouble, I found on scrutiny of the records, substantial evidence to show that this officer has been functioning in a malafide manner and has consequently ceased to command the confidence of all sections of the people. You would find from the records that while all Assamese persons arrested were invariably released on bail by the magistrate, the non-Assamese persons were invariably remanded to the judicial custody even though both the Assamese and the non-Assamese persons so forwarded were involved in the same case. Some of the Assamese miscreants who were arrested for possession of deadly weapons personally by the police and the SDM and offering resistance to arrests were

The job of investigative journalism is not to pick up some material and argue like a petty lawyer in a mofussil court. Investigative journalism requires analysis on the basis of facts and the material, social, political and administrative factors which lead to tragic incidents.

promptly released on bail, while persons arrested for petty curfew violations were forwarded to judicial custody since they happen to be Bengalis or poor Bihari labourers. I am in full agreement with the conclusion of the deputy commissioner and the subdivisional officer that communal considerations substantially influence judicial decisions of this

officer.

By the time the elections were held the Assam administration was totally paralysed. On this paralysed administration was superimposed the burden of the elections which were being violently opposed by a very large section of the population. Obviously, in this situation it could do pretty little to stop the massacre. But it bears repetition to state that the primary responsibility of maintaining social peace is that of social and political leaders and the responsibility of the administration comes only next. If leaders are guilty of dereliction of their primary duty, the administration alone cannot save society.

s for the genesis of the Assam nproblem, there have been four principal contradictions operating in the state. The main conflict has been ethnic-between Assamese and Bengalis, between Assamese and tribals and between Bengalis and tribals.

Mr Shourie has accused fellow journalists of buying the communal line in order to "(ingratiate) themselves with the rulers." Mr Shourie is held in high esteem by the journalistic community. Let him now show some necessary humility: he is not the only honest person in the profession.

Conflict number two relates to jobs and is largely between Assamese Hindus and Bengali Hindus. The conflict number three is on land between the Assamese and Bengali Muslims, between Assamese and tribals and between Bengali Muslims and tribals. In this situation, the RSS tried to fish in such troubled waters and succeeded in injecting some dose of Hindu-Muslim communalism into the problem. The RSS in 1980 passed a resolution that immigrant Bengali Hindus and immigrant Bengali Muslims should be treated differently. In 1983, the RSS passed another resolution that a Hindu majority is essential for the integrity of Assam. Mr Vajpayee aggravated Hindu-Muslim communal distrust when he said that there were reports that razakars were being dropped from helicopters with sophisticated weapons to kill indigenous people (Assam Tribune, 9 March).

The Congress(I) played a supplementary role by appealing to Muslim sentiments. That is a very dangerous game. We have our whole history behind us to show us how these emotions turn men into animals and result in killings of tens of thousands. The Assam problem is

quite complex.

Hindu communalism was one of the factors and not the only factor which caused the massacres. The communal overtones were surely most pronounced at Nellie. The single track approach to run down only the government will not help to find a solution. Nor will playing to the gallery help. It is perhaps, the limit of frivolity when Mr Shourie, discussing "seriously...what caused the Assam massacres" quotes a telex message of the Assam chief secretary to the home ministry asking for despatch of food packets (surely not from five-star hotels) for personnel on poll duties. This is one of the hundreds of messages which the Assam administration was sending. What does Mr Shourie want to prove? Even when somebody dies at home, the near and dear of **elve** dead person drink a cup of tea in an adjoining room when they come to mourn. This cannot be held against them, to show that they have no feeling for the departed soul. Investigative journalism does not mean selecting a target and ignoring or rejecting the evidence which goes counter to a previously formed assumption.

Mr Shourie has accused fellow journalists of buying the communal line in order to "(ingratiate) themselves with the rulers." Mr Shourie is held in high esteem by the journalistic community. Let him now show some necessary humility, he is not the only honest person in the profession. I have joined this debate most reluctantly. The wounds are deep in Assam. It would be better to provide a healing touch rather than go on reopening the wounds.

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"No leader in the history of world democracy could form a political party, won (sic) the hearts of millions and captured (sic) power within a short span of nine months. Mr N. T. Ramarao could alone perform this miracle,"—from the Annual Report 1982-83 of the Telugu Desam, given out at the party's convention at Vijayawada.

tem: Last month's convention of the Telugu Desam ended with a massive public meeting at a 85-acre plot on the out skirts of Vijayawada. The arrangements for the meeting were supervised by Mr V.D.S. Prakash Rao, a Vijayawada industrialist who had lent money to Mr N. T. Ramarao when the future star was a lowly clerk. For ten days before the meeting, Mr Prakash Rao spent virtually all his waking hours supervising arrangement for the meeting. Yet, he is not a party member. Mr N. T. Ramarao had asked him right at the beginning, he has even pointed out that Mr Prakash Rao would have been a minister by now. NTR continues to be a good friend but Mr Prakash Rao will still not be one of the 10-million odd who have joined the Telugu Desam party. When asked why, Mr Prakash Rao merely repeats: "No, no, I cannot be a member of this party,"and smiles knowingly at you.

Item: Journalists attending the convention were given a press badge which most pinned on to their shirt pockets. One day, one of them put his badge upside down unknowingly. A room waiter at the hotel saw this and pointed it out to the journalist. With typical pressmen's indifference to such trivia, the journalist told him, "How does it matter." The room waiter was most upset. "It does not matter? You put an important thing like that upside down and it does not matter?" The boy left no doubt that he thought that this was a slur on the Telugu Desam and NTR. Whatever else might have or might not have happened, the pride of the Telugu people has certainly been aroused.

SUNDAY SPECIAL

A sanyasi's progress

Six months have elapsed since the actor-turned politician N.T. Ramarao came to power as the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh. What are his achievements? Has he been a saviour to the Telugus? AJAY KUMAR examines.

Scepticism and pride: these two are the overwhelming attitudes in Andhra Pradesh, six months after NTR was swept to power. Local journalists, no sympathisers of the Congress (I), tell you how no matter how specific a question you ask, NTR will give a long-winded reply which will be vague in the extreme. NTR, they say now, has "verbal diarrhoea and

mental impotence."

For the people, however, NTR is still the saviour. The popularity he commands has to be seen to be believed. The convention of the party was held on the grounds of the Sidharth College. At one end of the ground, a small hut had been made where NTR stayed for the three days of the convention. Entry to the convention premises was restricted and yet whenever NTR emerged from the hut to walk the 100-odd metres to the hall where the delegates were conferring, a crowd of hundreds of people would gather around just to gape and walk a few steps with their Anna. You see their devotion in the sparkle in their eyes. I particularly remember the sight of an old lady scrambling to get on top of a foothigh roadside kerb as NTR went past in his famous Chevrolet jutting his torso out. When NTR, folded hands and bowed head, turned towards the old lady, the look she gave her grown-up daughter, standing next to her, was one of unalloyed pride.

Six months after NIR came to power, what is his report card like? Before that question can be answered, a caveat has to be entered. NTR is unique in many ways: no chief minister has assumed power without any kind of obligation whatsoever as NTR did. Telugu Desam MLAs fought the January election not on funds collected by the party from the usual moneyed sources: they paid for their own campaigns. In NTR's case, it is truly the people who put him into power. When he says, "Neme Prajah, prajale nenu (I am the people, the people are me), he can only be accused of exaggerating slightly.

NTR has shown every evidence

that he is fully conscious—and more—of the amazing faith the six crore people of Andhra Pradesh have reposed in him. And this, he believes, was divinely ordained. His coming to power is an act of God and his sacred duty is to serve the people. For them, he is convinced, he is: a saviour. For anybody who comes in the way of their welfare, he would like to be a Yama. To show that no temptation can bedevil his calling, he has become a *sanyasi*. He says he has renounced all his worldly possessions. Any day now he will have shifted from his deluxe residence to a simple four-room hut. Coming from anybody else, all this would he met with disbelief: NTR so transparently believes in the divinity of it all, he has to be granted the benefit of the doubt.

Having done that, a corollary follows: NTR cannot be judged by the benchmarks used for the ordinary. He has set himself extremely high standard; he has proclaimed them from every pulpit—even at exclusive interviews with journalists he talks most about his calling. He has, then, to be judged by those standards.

Examined thus, NTR's report card can only say: 'Extremely hard working but tends to be impatient. Is slowly coming to grips with the reality. No one doubts his sincerity but like Lady Macbeth he protests too much. For a political novice, he has shown an amazing grasp of the importance of political gestures. The danger is the gesture threatens to become all. Seems to have developed ambitions beyond his state. The danger is he might forget his mandate is to set Andhra right. Is the party personified. The danger is the party may never take roots. Overall: lots of scope for improvement.'

Andhra Pradesh is a state of contradictions. With an annual rice output of 75 lakh tonnes it is the rice granary of the country but its farmers do not get a remunerative price for it. It is also surplus in sugarcane, tobacco and most important, power, but 30 crore Andhraites are below.

the poverty line. It has two perennial rivers, Krishna and Godavari traversing it, but it has been drought-afflicted for the last yearcurrently, 172 of its 302 talukas have been declared drought-hit. It is rich in deposits of limestone, mica, coal and hydrocarbons and yet its per capita income is lower than the other three Southern states. To compound its economic problems, the previous Congress (I) ministry went on such a pre-election spending spree that the Telugu Desam, which had vowed to implement several welfare measures, was constrained to decree a total freeze on plan and non-plan expenditure in the last two months of the last financial year—the period in which traditionally, all governments go on a spending spree to exhaust theirmisspent allotments.

When NTR took over, the state kitty was empty. On the other hand. NTR had promised several welfare measures in his election manifesto. Of these, the most important ones were the schemestoprovide a midday meal for school children and rice at Rs two per kg. The final shapes of the scheme emerged only earlier this month. The flip-flops in the schemes in these six months are possibly the best example of how NTR has dealt

with economic realities.

On the rice scheme, the election manifesto of the Telugu Desam said: "It is the firm resolve of the Telugu Desam to ensure sale of a kilogram of rice for two rupees." Since no criterion was mentioned, it was assumed that the rice would be made available to all.

At the swearing-in, NTR announced that the scheme would be confined to the "poor." This was interpreted to mean those below the poverty line i.e. with an annual income of less than Rs 3,000. Since this would have excluded half the state, there was an immediate uproar. The outcry was still to die down. When NTR announced at a public meeting before the Himayatnagar bypoll in late February, that the scheme would cover everybody. Finally, on 22 March, it was announced that only those with incomes less than Rs 6,000 would be eligible. Further the amount that each family could buy would be 25 kg and not 10 kg as had been rumoured.

It had been anticipated that the state would require 10 lakh tonnes to meet the requirements of an estimated 60 lakh families. It was then estimated that, at 70p a kg, the state subsidy would come to Rs 33 crores. The final figures are dramatically different: the scheme will cover 90 lakh families (out of 1,06,000 families in the state), the rice offtake would be about 22 lakh tonnes and the state's subsidy Rs 70 crores. The financial year 1983-84 is only two months old and the final budget of the state is still to be presented. What the scheme eventually costs

will depend on the actual withdrawals from the fair price shops: in most rural areas rice is available at around Rs two in any case. Whatever happens eventually, NTR cannot be accused of not trying to provide the staple diet to most of his state's people.

The fate of the midday meal scheme for school children has been less kind. Originally, 60 lakh students in the age-group 6-11 were to get a meal consisting of 100 gms of rice, 15 gms of dal, five gms of oil cooked in sambhar with local vegetables added. The logistics of cooking and feeding proved too much, the costs shot up and it was discovered that even adults were partaking of the scheme. The meal was then slashed to just one bun (60 gm) and 100 ml of milk to be given to only 12 lakh children in government and municipal schools. In a rice-eating state, nobody wanted buns. At the

NTR: everyman's CM



end of four months it was computed that Rs 48 crores had already been spent on the scheme: the 15-point programme of the party, pragati padham had estimated that Rs 80 crores would be spent on it. Finally, in early June, NTR announced that the scheme would provide precooked rice and sambhar only to children of parents belonging to the SC/ST, backward communities and those with income of less than Rs 3,000 a year. A sum of Rs 100 crores, he said, had been allotted for it. Precisely how many students will benefit is not known: one estimate said the figure would be only 20 lakhs.

Yet, NTR has emerged relatively unscathed in his entanglement with these schemes than with several other of his decisions. Some of these are of doubtful merit. Others have led to unseemly controversies and yet others to downright malicious

gossip.

Most prominent in the first category was to retire 18,000 government employees at 55 instead of 58 years of age. In its justification it was said that firstly, this was fulfilling a promise made in the manifesto and secondly, it was meant to create opportunities for the poor. The matter was taken up to the Supreme Court and though it upheld the validity of the decision it directed the state to pay compensation to the affected employees. It is estimated that this will entail an outgo of Rs 90 crores, that is one-ninth of the state's plan outlay for 1983-84. In any case, the move alienated as many people as it seeks to help. Also, as people ask, what was the hurry? The government could well have given a year's notice to the employees to reduce their financial hardships and emotional trauma.

Similarly, NTR also announced that the Legislative Council would be abolished. Two reasons were given: economy— the state would save Rs 50 lakhs—and since the government had collected an informal group of intellectuals to advise it there was no need for the council. Yet, the impression persisted that NTR's decision was more because the Congress had a two-thirds majority in the 90-member council.

Some decisions have raised more controversy. NTR had his first skirmish with the press when he denied what he had told them. Speaking to senior correspondents soon after he came to power, he told them that he would shortly shift his residence to the deluxe Lake View Guest House. When Janata leaders Jaipal Reddy attacked him for this, NTR denied having told pressmen any such thing.

Particularly thoughtless was the government's handling of its decision to ask the Tirupati Devasthanam to shift its surplus funds of Rs 30 crores plus from the banks to the state treasury. Per se there was nothing suspicious about the move but

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it was announced so arbitrarily and the government explanation took a fortnight to come with the result that it pointlessly got a bad name. Later, the move got stuck in the courts, so the state treasury is yet to receive the funds.

Similarly, the government decided summarily that government doctors would not be allowed to do private practice. The objective behind this was laudable: like in other states. most government doctors neglect poor patients and provide effective treatment only at their private clinics. In most other states, with similar rules a non-practising allowance is given to doctors. Theoretically, there is nothing unjust about not giving any such allowance. But then, as the doctors argued, they should not be required to do duty for as many as 18 hours a day on occasions—as is the current situation. If the government was trying to reform, it should arrange to recruit 6,000 doctors-2,000 more than on the current rolls. The doctors took

this case to the Supreme Court which upheld their argument. They continue to do private practice. In the process all that NTR achieved was to alienate 4,000 highly articulate and

organised professionals.

Yet another controversial decision taken related to the organisation of the zilla parishads. The last panchayat elections were held when Mr Anjaiah was the chief minister. They were not fought on party lines but the Congress had prevailed at all the levels. After the Telugu Desam came to power, it became politically necessary to gain command of the panchayat samitis and the zilla parishads. The party's problem was that it couldn't induce defections: that was what the Congress(I) became notorious for. To get around this, a bill was passed which said that a chairman of a zilla parishad would be removed on a simple majority and not three fifths as earlier. The bill also stipulated that nobody could simultaneously be chairman of a zilla parishad and an MLA or MP. Later, this bill was referred to a select

committee of legislators but the government's haste has cast doubts about its faith in democratic institutions.

Several decisions have also been taken about the affairs of the Telugu Desam which have raised eyebrows. At last month's convention, the party did away with the proposed election of the 14-member state executive committee, the highest body in the party. Instead, Mr N.T. Rama Rao, the president of the party, who is the only partyman allowed to hold two posts simultaneously, was asked to nominate the body, which he did.

Mr Rama Rao claimed then that he was personally against the move but he could not very well refuse the partymen's wishes, could he? That was an odd thing to say considering that in an interview he said he saw nothing wrong in his taking all the

party's decisions.

The move was justified on the argument that had the elections been allowed there would have been even more wrangling than was seen during the party elections up to the

Is NTR guilty of nepotism?

Was high level nepotism the reason for the municipal corporator of Hyderabad being overruled in the conversion of the Ramakrishna Cine Studios into two cinema theatres? The question which is part of a raging controversy in Hyderabad becomes interesting because the Ramakrishna Cine Studios were put up by the present Andhra Pradesh chief minister N. T. Ramarao during his career as a filmstar. The studios are now being managed by NTR's son N. Jayakrishna. The Ramakrishna Studios were, till recently, the headquarters of the Telugu Desam party and is situated at the busy Musheerabad Cross Roads. Mr Jayakrishna filed an application to the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH) in December 1980 seeking permission to construct two film theatres on the site. The MCH and the Hyderabad Urban Development Authority (HUDA) did not give approval to the plan on the grounds that the Musheerabad area was already highly congested However, with the reported assistance of a former additional secretary in the department of municipal administration, the issue was reopened on the same representation and permission was granted.

A government order (GO) dated 19 May 1983, was issued by the secretary, housing, municipal administration and urban development, Mr Jayakar P. Johnson, relaxing the provisions of the zoning regulations. The GO, a photocopy of which was published in a local English daily, provided for the change of land use from special industrial use zone to local commercial use zone in favour of Ramakrishna Cine Studios for the conversion of the land for the two cinema theatres. The GO also assessed the compounding fee for regularisation of the existing studio building at Rs 1,000 and instructed the special officer, MCH, to take action and issue a building permit to the petitioner.

Earlier, the compounding fee levied by the government for regularising certain constructions in the studio complex which were in violation of the rules had been fixed at Rs 2,000 (this was reduced to Rs 1,000). Sources in the municipal administration indicated that it is not usual practice to relax or change urban zoning regulations with respect to only one building in a locality. Also, a gazette notification is required regarding the intended relaxation on urban land use zone regulations and public objections to the change have to be entertained. In the special case of the Ramakrishna Studios, the secretary to the government directed the special officer, MCH to issue a building permit. The opposition parties have been quick to take up the issue and have demanded a CBI probe into the questionable manner in which government permission was given to the chief minister's son In a memorandum to the Governor of the state, two former legislators have claimed that the wording of the GO makes it amply clear that the change in land use was made for the benefit of a single individual and not in the interests of the locality.

Sometime ago, during the Vijayawada convention of the Telugu Desam, when NTR was charged with nepotism he said that his son had been requested by the government to build up the film industry in the state. An official spokesman in a press release issued by the state department of information and public relations denied reports that HUDA had mitially rejected Mr Jayakrishna's request. The spokesman claimed that HUDA had recommended the conversion and the matter had been processed mainly during the tenure of the previous government. The present government had only accepted the recommendations. In his representation Mr Jayakrishna requested permission for conversion as the studios were in a busy commercial area and work was constantly disrupted by the high noise levels in the area and it interfered with the recordings. But as a senior offical told Sunday, these reasons are just as valid for not adding to the already high noise levels and congestion in one of the busiest localities of the city.

Shubha Singh

district level held earlier. This would have created disunity at a time when the party couldn't afford dissension. No amount of justification has, however, been able to dispel the criticism that the move was very reminiscent of the state of affairs in

the Congress(I).

There was another unfortunate decision at the convention. In an attempt to establish intra-party democracy it had been decided that any decision taken by a unit of the party would be binding at higher levels of the party. Decentralisation of power should not just be a motto it should be practised right down the line. For one thing, this would eliminate the rush to the capital on the eve of distribution of tickets at an election time—a malaise that affects all parties. Without giving this experiment enough time, the convention decided that henceforth the decision of lower bodies would only be a recommendation. This flies in the face of the party's coommitment to decentralisation.

The many reasons for which NTR's government has earned praise have been so many that it would be absurd even to suggest that in sum, the statehas been the loser. It is undeniable that the nakedness of corruption is not there. By forbidding legislators from staying on in Hyderabad when the legislature is not in session, NTR may well succeed in turning power brokers into representatives of the people. The disciplining of the government employees has not merely cleaned up the secretariat, it has streamlined the administration. The reorganisation of 48 government corporations into 16 of them, and the replacement of legislators at their apex by officials, is expected to reduce government expenditure by Rs 3 crores annually. The abolition of pension for legislators will not only save Rs 35 lakhs per year, it also removes an amazing anomaly.

In spite of all this, the opinion that media fraternity in Andhra Pradesh has of the performance of NTR is not very flattering. They explain this by saving that it is not that they wish to deemphasise the good that he has done. They acknowledge that of Hyderabad's leading papers, only one has been unfailingly critical of NTR and that is owned by a Congress(I) MP. They are disappointed because they see portents of the Telegu Desam headed the same way as the totally ineffective AIADMK in Tamil Nadu. They argue that no party can' prosper purely on personal charisma: it must have a correct grasp of reality and it must have a sensible socio-economic programme.

NTR has given enough reasons to give rise to the feeling that while his instincts might be right, his grasp of more intricate matters is not quite satisfactory. At a press conference he was asked what ideology his party believes in His reply came instantly:



NTR escorts Dr Farooq Abdullah during, the opposition meeting in Vijayawada: a meeting of minds

"We have our own ideals," delivered in an even monotone, while looking intensely into the middle distance and away from the questioner. It is this kind of reply which has led to unkind comments like, "You ask NTR anything, anything under the sun, he will have a reply. But if you can make sense out of the reply you

are smarter than I am."

The dangers to the Telugu Desam come all from within. Factionalism and dissidence has already raised its head. NTR attempted to snuff it out by threatening to quit the party if infighting did not stop. It is all very well for NTR to give all to his 12 children and then claim renunciation of worldly possessions but it will take a tougher moral fibre for the party's 199 other MLAs to walk the straight and narrow. It remains to be seen how long these MLAs refrain from recouping the lakhs they had spent on their election.

The feeling is already there that the party has been more than kind to NTR's family: his son-in-law, Dr Venkateshwaran Rao, has been nominated the head of the youth unit of the party, Telugu Yuvata; another son-in-law, Chandrababu Naidu, former Congress(I) minister has been admitted into the party after its admission rules were bent for him; his wife and other family members sat in at the delegates session at the Vijayawada convention; his son Jayakrishna has been shown undue favours by the government (see box). If this tendency is not arrested, the effect on the party can be predicted. NTR must not only be seen to be above nepotism, he must be actually above it.

He has also sheer political sense by his fierce espousal of the need to give more powers to the states. The realisation, he says, has grown out of

his frustration at not being financially able to do as much for his state as he would like to. While this cannot be denied, his rhetoric on the issue has brought him to the centre-stage of a national debate. While the CPI(M) in West Bengal was the first to raise this issue, and can even now marshal more facts than NTR can. the demand for a review of centrestate relations has come to be more closely identified with NTR. His success in getting the 13 other opposition parties to present the issue as of prime importance, has only enhanced this impression. In the event, it has also given NTR a platform to reach out to people beyond Andhra Pradesh. It will be that much easier for him to break out of the shell of being a regional leader.

Politically, the hold of the Telugu Desam over the state has only tightened since the elections. It has not only won all but one by-election, it has even gained control of four (out of 23) zilla parishads. By enrolling more than 10 million members it has started on the long road to establishing a grass roots party. It has also set up fronts for trade unions, youth, women, cells for minorities and backwards so that it remains a movement also. The party is well on its way to being a juggernaut. It will have to watch out for the people who might get crushed unseen.

There is one problem with miracles: the people start believing in them. And then they want more of them. NTR has achieved one miracle: now the people expect Ram Rajya from him. Even his 18-hour days might prove too little. Of all the country's leaders, he carries the most amount of people's hope. He cannot afford to rest and he cannot afford to be wrong.

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'We should move faster'

NTR tells Shubha Singh

: You have been at the helm of affairs for quite some time. What would you list as your accomplishments during this period?

A: Our accomplishments are there for the public to see. We have started our programme to sell rice at Rs two a kg to the poor people, initiated legislation to give equal rights to women, abolition of pension to legislators, reduced the number of state public sector corporations, established a women's university at Tirupati which will start functioning from this academic year...The government has taken up an anti-corruption drive to wipe out corrupt practices in the state. We have enlarged employment opportunities in the state with the reduction of retirement age for government employees from 58 to 55 years, banned capitation fees in private engineering and medical colleges and introduced Telugu as the official language at all levels.

Q: Are you satisfied at the pace at which your government is moving?

A: We should be more speedy. Q: Which projects or programmes do you think should be taken up at a faster pace?

A: There is no delay from the government we are heading. As I told you, I am a speedy man by nature, so I think we should be faster.

Q: Which projects would you like

to take up first? A: Equal rights for women, reorganisation of the districts and reorientation of the cooperatives, abolition of the Legislative Council, etc...

Q: What are your future plans? A: We are moving according to our manifesto. Next I must think of making the concerned departments more effective. In the sphere of education, the academic year is starting-in the month of June-we must be effective. The text books should be ready. We have abolished capitation fees, So, we must make the colleges self-sufficient.

Q: You made a statement earlier on the politicisation of the student bodies. Are you going to take some action on this issue?

A: Yes, I am going to hold talks

with them. Q: With the student bodies?

A: No, with the political parties. Because I want to take their views also on the subject. I want to see some discipline in the institutions.

Q: Also during the elections to the students' unions, you stated about the violence in educational institutions...

A: Elections should be held without any disturbances at all.

Q: You want elections to be held without interference from political parties on a non-party basis.

A: No. I have not resolved this as yet. I want to see what they (the students) want what they feel. I am for more involvement and responsibility for the students. I am trying to bring them into the college sen-

Q: You have made some modifications in the midday meal scheme?

A: No, no modifications. It is only for the needy.

Q: Before the elections you had promised that the lunch scheme would cover all school children between the ages of six and 11 years.

A: We have not implemented our policy as yet. So far the old policy had been continuing. We are giving food only to those who need it, not to those who throw it away or do not eat it. We want to make the scheme more effective.

Q: You have taken a lot of decisions but some of them have not been implemented because of stay orders from the courts. Were the decisions not planned and thought out properly?

A: They are all our party's poli-

Q: How would you say that your government is different from the previous governments in the state?

A: There is a watch being con-

'I am a speedy man'



ducted on bribery and on corruption. We want to give a clean government without any corruption or undue influences operating on us.

Q: There are reports of dissension in your party. What are you doing about it?

A: We have a rule about defections. It applies to all of us. First of

Q: Most of the dissatisfaction in the Telugu Desam is not going to cause defections. It only relates to certain decisions or against certain persons...

A: We will correct it at the party

level itself.

Q: So, you do not think there is any place in your party for dissension or disagreement?

O: Party members should think

on the same lines?

A: They should go hand-in-hand, not disagree with others. Otherwise, disciplinary action will be taken against them.

O: In the case of B. Gopal, MLA from Chittoor who has been expelled from the party, isn't the party being vindictive when it says that it will mount a public campaign to force him to resign from the Assembly?

A: If a member's actions are against the unity of the party or the party discipline, then there is no

place for him.

O: You do not think that he can. have a role as an independent MLA in the Assembly? Your party has already expelled him.

A: According to the oath he took before the elections he should resign from the Assembly otherwise it just shows what kind of a person he

Q: What do you think is the outcome of the opposition leaders' meeting at Vijayawada?

A: We met and talked on how the states should conduct themselves and some of the national issues.

Q: After seeing the political leaders at the Vijayawada meeting what was your impression? Will the opposition parties unite?

A: (Laughs) We were together...

Q: During the elections, one of the points raised by you was lowering of the self-respect of the Telugus.

A: Correct, we have increased the self-respect.

Q: Would you call the Vijayawada conclave a reversal of the trend in opposition politics...

A: (Laughs loudly) Thank you very much. I will take it as a compliment.

HERSH, MORARJI AND THE CIA

It is hardly surprising that an intelligence outfit as massive as the CIA should have agents in India. Indeed, it has been known for a long time that the CIA had been successful in planting its agents at the highest level of the government—including one in the cabinet. For years, speculations have been going on over the identity of the cabinet minister in India who might be on the CIA's payroll and from time to time various names—Y. B. Chavan, Jagjivan Ram, and C. Subramaniam—cropped up in this connection. But nobody ever took these conjectures seriously as it is almost customary in India for political rivals to brand each other as CIA or KGB agents. But when a widely respected journalist like Seymour Hersh points his accusing finger to a revered politician like Morarji Desai, it is altogether a different matter. SHARON BUTLER reports from Washington.

or Seymour Hersh, the knowledge that Morarji Desai was an agent for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), is not as important as his account of meetings between the Indian ambassador to the US, Mr L. K. Jha, and the US secretary of state, Henry Kissinger. "Read a little bit further," he coaxes, "that stuff is far more interesting." The meetings highlight Kissinger's dubious manipulations in his handling of foreign affairs-the subject of Mr Hersh's book. But for Indians, even the hint that Mr Desai was on the CIA's payroll, if true, is a scandal that eclipses all other intrigues. For them, this is one more piece of evidence to fuel suspicions of CIA infiltration into highest level in the country, suspicions often dismissed as wild speculation.

According to Mr Hersh's account in his new book, The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House, Mr Desai was not only a paid informer for the CIA (at \$20,000 a year), but a 'star performer' and one of the agency's most important 'assets.' Mr Hersh reports, quoting unnamed; sources, that Henry Kissinger, then; national security adviser to the President, was very impressed by the CIA's contact and that during meetings with top officials on international crises, he would often turn to Richard Helms, director of the CIA, and say, "Why can't you have a source in the cabinet?"

Mr Hersh also claims that he has "firmly established" that Mr Desai worked for the agency during the Johnson administration (apparently through the so-called 303 Committee, a covert intelligence group which was replaced by the 40 Committee under the Nixon administration) and up until 1970. He presumes

that after that year Mr Desai continued to file his reports, although his unnamed sources did not have access to reports after 1970. He also cites circumstantial evidence to the effect that in 1971, President Richard Nixon and Mr Kissinger repeatedly emphasised the high position and the proven reliability of their intelligence sources in India.

Although, according to Mr Hersh, Mr Desai's reports mostly concerned Indo-Soviet exchanges, Mr Desai also relayed one extremely critical piece of information to US intelligence on 8 December 1971: that India was on the verge of attacking West Pakistan. The information played a dramatic role, for it was used by President Nixon and Mr Kissinger to justify their tilt towards Pakistan in face of increasing opposition from the US state department. Mr Nixon called it one of the few really timely

pieces of intelligence the CIA had ever given him. Both he and Mr Kissinger in their respective memoirs cite the intelligence information as authoritative. Harping on Mrs Gandhi's supposed hypocrisy in disclaiming designs on Pakistan, Mr Nixon says in his memoirs that the India-Pakistan crisis took "a disturbing turn. Through intelligence sources we learned that at a meeting of the Indian cabinet Mrs Gandhi had led a discussion of plans to expand the war on the western front and to invade West Pakistan." Mr Kissinger, in his White House Years, writes that "heretofore reliable sources" informed him in May 1971 that "Mrs Gandhi had ordered plans for a lightning 'Israeli-type' attack to take over East Pakistan." In the same book he also writes that on 7 December 1971 "a report reached us from a source whose reliability we

Morarji Desai with President Johnson in the White House: carrying a precious gift



had never had any reason to doubt and which I do not question today, to the effect that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was determined to reduce even West Pakistan to impotence."

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While analysing the Nixon-Kissinger tilt policy, Christopher Van Hollen, who was deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs at the time, asserts that President Nixon and Mr Kissinger were alone in the interpretation of the CIA information, which Mr Hersh alleges Mr Desai authored. They used it to buttress their own prejudices against India (clearly reflected in Mr Nixon's memoirs) and to argue against more knowledgeable state department analysts at a meeting of the Washington special action group on 8 December. The analysts doubted if India was intent on turning West Pakistan into a 'client state.' They also argued that Indian objectives to eliminate the Pakistani armoured corps and air force was a logical step since Pakistani planes and tanks had spearheaded the attack on 3 December 1971. Yet, Mr Van Hollen says, the CIA report "caused Mr Kissinger to try to promote a close alliance relationship with Pakistan suggesting that, if India attacked West Pakistan, the US was committed by prior agreement to come to its de-

The identity of the author of the intelligence on India's intentions during the India-Pakistan crisis has long been a dark protected secret. It was assumed that because of the nature of the information passed, the informer must have run in the highest levels of the Indian government. In 1979, Thomas Powers, in his *Por*trait of the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, spurred further speculation about the identity of the informer, for he claimed that the informer was a member of the cabinet itself (This fact is not consistent with Mr Hersh's account since Mr Desai had left the cabinet in

1969.) According to Mr Powers, the CIA had made reference to an agent in the Indian cabinet in a report to President Nixon in 1971 explaining that the Soviets had signed a friendship treaty with India with the intention of dissuading India from formally recognising East Pakistan as an independent nation-a move which the Soviets thought would precipitate war with Pakistan.

The report fell into the hands of a reporter of the *New York Times*, Tad Szulc, who carried the substance of the intelligence in a frontpage article on 13 August 1971, though he made no mention of the cabinet-level agent. Mr Powers writes in *The Man* Who Kept Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA that Mr Helms was concerned about the life of his agent in India and immediately set two investigators on the White House staff, Egil Krogh and his assistant David Young, to find out how the

story had been leaked.

Later that year, according to Mr Powers, leaks to the press more seriously compromised the same agent. On 7 December, Mr Powers writes, Henry Kissinger asked the CIA for an estimate of the probability of an Indian attack on West Pakistan. Within 24 hours, "the CIA case officer handling the Indian politician in Mrs Gandhi's cabinet in New Delhi was told that a decision had just been reached to attack in the west," But when that intelligence report along with other top secret documents were published in the columns of Jack Anderson, "that was the end of the agent," says Mr Powers. According to the deputy director for plans, Mr Thomas Karamessines, "he (the Indian agent) told us to go to hell."

That the CIA was active and had been active for a long time in India was no secret. Reliable accounts had already disclosed at least some of the agency's activities. By columnist Jack Anderson's

account, in his book The Anderson Papers, published in 1973, India was crawling with CIA agents. "The CIA had penetrated the Indian government at every level and these independent sources sent a steady stream of reports (during the India-Pakistan war) on troop movements, logistics, strategy, and even some of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's secret conversations." According to Mr Anderson, the information was obtained not from the directorate of intelligence, the division of the CIA which utilises sophisticated spy satellites and other earthbound eavesdropping equipment, but rather pre-eminently from the directorate for plans, the CIA's "dirty-tricks department." The CIA infiltration in India had been going on for some time, according to Mr Anderson's analysis, since agents there were described as old and reliable sources.

According to Mr Anderson, intelligence information at the time of the war with Pakistan included a report of secret conversations on 13 December 1971, between Mr Nikolay M. Pegov, the Russian ambassador to India, and top Indian officials. Mr Pegov reportedly advised India to occupy Bangladesh quickly and accept a ceasefire, and to no longer pursue an offensive into West Pakistan. He also told Indians that the movements of the US Seventh Fleet was just an effort to bully India. Intelligence information at the time also included reports on private conversations between Yahya Khan and his Prime Minister Nurul Amin that China would back up Pakistan in its conflict with India as well as report on Soviet ship movements in the Indian Ocean and Chinese troop movements in Tibet. Besides the reports from the CIA, of course, intelligence information from defence attaches in US embassies, such as Colonel Melvin Holst in Nepal, also streamed into Washington from South Asia.

CIA activities in India date back much further than the Seventies. According to the insiders' accounts most of the anti-US demonstrations in Calcutta during the Fifties and early Sixties were financed and organised by the CIA. The logic behind this was that with an anti-US feeling running high in the state, the Russians could have easily capitalised on it to foment a hate-US campaign. The CIA pre-empted the possibility by organising demonstrations against itself. Since they were funding the demonstrations they could keep a check on the demonstrators and determine how far they could go.

During the Korean War, an agent in Bombay tipped off American covert operators in South-East Asia that medical supplies were being shipped from India to North Korea. Joseph Goulden in his book Korea: The Untold Story of the War, published early last year, claims that a

(I to r) Kissinger with C. Subramaniam, T.A. Pai, Jagjivan Ram and Y.B. Chavan







Morarji with Jawaharlal Nehru and Mrs Gandhi: a cabinet member for two generations

Norwegian vessel carrying medical supplies was pirated from the high seas in 1951 by the CIA with the help of Taiwan. The information, according to Mr Goulden, that made the piracy possible came from a CIA agent in Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet. Also, according to Victor Marchetti and John Marks, in their book The CIA and the cult of intelligence, the CIA maintained large support or training facilities for covert operations in north-east India. (Because of deletions imposed by a CIArequested federal court order. however, the authors were unable to elaborate.) Mr Marchetti and Mr Marks also say in their book that Stalin's daughter, Svetlana Stalin, was assisted in her defection to the West by CIA agents in India (and by the US ambassador Chester Bowles). It was again during Chester Bowles' tenure that the CIA recruited 14 American mountain climbers to install a nuclear-powered recording device at the top of Nanda Devi in 1965. The device was meant to monitor China's rocket telemetry and atomic tests. However, a storm aborted the expedition of CIA agents, an avalanche swept all the instruments away, and the plutonium was lost at the headwaters of the Ganges river. In 1966, a second Indo-American expedition was successful and safely installed the listening device atop Nanda Kot, adjacent to Nanda Devi. The original mishap was finally unearthed by the Washington Post in 1978. The then Prime Minister Morarji Desai confirmed that the incident had taken place and that the expeditions were

and India.
Daniel Moynihan, the US ambassador to India from 1973 to 1975, also reveals yet more CIA activities, this time of a more political nature, in a few short paragraphs in A Dangerous Place, his memoirs, which were published in 1978. In 1974, Mr Moynihan writes, even as Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was still harping in her speeches on the dangers of CIA subversion, Mr Moynihan was meeting with top Indian officials over policy issues and China. Consequently, he

joint ventures by the United States

decided to have his embassy staff check back over the records of the last 25 years to "establish just what we had been up to." But, says Mr Moynihan, the search turned up very little. "We had twice, but only twice, interfered in Indian politics to the extent of providing money to a political party." The embarrassing fact for Mrs Gandhi was that both times the money was contributed to the Congress party, which had apparently asked for it, and once to Mrs Gandhi herself. The money was given to support the Congress campaigns against the Communist party, once in Kerala, and once in West Bengal. Mr Moynihan also comments, "As we were no longer giving money to (Mrs Gandhi), it was understandable that she should wonder just to whom we were giving it."

But while CIA activities are known to have existed in India, the allegation that Mr Morarji Desai worked for the Central Intelligence Agency caught many in the US by surprise. Many, including academicians and former state department officials are loathe to believe it. The CIA, as a matter of policy, refused to comment. Mr Van Hollen said that he had no knowledge of the matter (and that he is glad he did not). Mr Myron Weiner, professor of political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was extremely sceptical of Mr Hersh's allegation. Pointing out that journalists are often used by US intelligence officers and administration officials for political purposes, he questioned Mr Hersh's sources. Mr Weiner was in a study group of the council of foreign relations in 1971, which examined the India-Pakistan conflict and disputed Mr Kissinger's interpretation of events. He was long questioned whether there even was an agent sending Mr Kissinger information.

Similarly, Robert Goheen, the US ambassador to India when Mr Desai was Prime Minister, also expressed disbelief. "I find that implausible," he said. "I have known Mr Desai a great many years, going back to when he was a finance minister. I know him as a very loyal Indian

nationalist and a very highprincipled man. I just can't believe that he would have been bought." Mr Goheen also added that when he was ambassador to India, he "had no indication that Mr Desai had done such a thing or that he expected any special favours from the United States. Indeed, in many matters he dealt with us very severely."

But the veteran reporter Seymour Hersh stands by his story and indeed claims that he has "somewhat more" stuff on Desai and CIA. But he declined to give any more information on the subject saying, "I'm not out to pillory him. I'm only naming him because of the way Kissinger and Nixon manipulated the information to justify policy." Commenting on Desai's reaction calling his story sheer madness, Mr Hersh said, "I don't know what else he could say." When asked to give an idea of the reliability of his sources, he said, "Oh come on" and proceeded to cite his credentials. "I don't think anybody has won as many prizes in the last ten years as I have." Mr Hersh worked for the New York Times from 1972-1979 and now works as the national correspondent for the prestigious Atlantic magazine. He has won more than a dozen major journalism awards, including the 1970 Pulitzer Prize for international reporting for his story on the My Lai massacre, the George Polk award for this reporting on the secret B-52 bombing of Cambodia, and Polk and other awards for his stories on the CIA and Chile, CIA's domestic spying, and the involvement of former CIA officials in selling arms to Libya. He said that his CIA sources spoke with him only on the condition that they would not be identified, but his sources have proved unfailingly accurate, as evidenced by his previous work. When asked if his source could have mistaken Morarji Desai for Mr M.J. Desai, a former foreign secretary of India, Mr Hersh said with obvious contempt, "I have come to a new understanding of who this man was. If you are interested, his real name was: Toothfairy. That is spelt T-O-O-T-H-F-A-I-R-Y."

CAN HERSH BE WRONG?

Many Presidents and Prime Ministers are known to have been among the CIA 'moles.' But very few in India appear to be inclined to accept the American journalist Seymour Hersh's suggestion that the former Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai had been on the CIA's payroll for a long time. Mr Desai himself dismissed the charge as 'sheer madness.' Even his bitterest enemies could not visualise an idealist and a moralist like Morarji Desai feeding the CIA with vital secrets of the country. For instance, Charan Singh, another former Prime Minister, who never misses an opportunity to criticise Mr Desai did not think Hersh's report was credible. "I cannot believe that Mr Desai had worked as the agent of any foreign intelligence agency," he said. Gulzari Lal Nanda, twice acting Prime Minister and the union home minister in the Sixties, similarly dismissed the allegations saying: "I do not

know on what material the book has made the charge but I do not believe

The first hint that a CIA agent might be sitting in the union cabinet came with the publication of the book. Portrait of the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, by Thomas Powers in the winter of 1979. The then minister for external affairs, S.N. Mishra, ordered the officials of his ministry to release relevant extracts from the book relating to India and the CIA to the Indian press on 15 November 1979 to halt wild speculations on the subject. Simultaneously, he also ordered a high-level investigation to establish the identity of the unnamed CIA agent in the Indian cabinet. Mrs Gandhi, who was then out of power, when asked what she thought of the possibility of a CIA agent being in her cabinet, she said that it might not be altogether impossible although if she had known it she

would have certainly thrown the person out of her cabinet.

Nothing much has since been heard about the outcome of the probe initiated by the Janata government and later followed up by Mrs Gandhi. One reason could be that the inquiries had drawn a blank. Curiously, one person who should have known the most of the matter-Mrs Gandhi-is yet to comment on Hersh's report. Another person who is keeping quiet is India's former defence minister, Jagjivan Ram.

Thomas Powers, who had originally suggested in his book that the unnamed CIA agent was a cabinet member, later admitted having committed an error and maintained that the agent was actually a civil servant

The weakest point in Hersh's story is that the CIA was paying a miserly \$20,000 a year to Morarji Desai for the information it was getting from him. For one thing, Mr Desai has been in important positions for such a long time that he could have got any amount at his asking, any day. For another, even a raw CIA recruit during his training period is paid a salary of \$27,000 annually in addition to other perks he is entitled to. On close questioning Mr Hersh, of course, admitted that Mr Desai was getting very little, much less than he was actually worth. But that, according to him, was because Mr Desai was working for the CLA not for money but for his pathological dislike for the communists.

It is true that till 1977, when he became the Prime Minister, Mr Desai had been an anti-communist to the core but that could hardly be sufficient reason for him to seek employment with the CIA. Other discrepancies in Mr Hersh's report are: Mr Desai was not the Deputy Prime Minister after Mrs Gandhi divested him of his finance portfolio in the summer of 1969 (Mr Hersh says Mr Desai continued to be in the cabinet even after that), and Mrs Gandhi did not come back to power till January 1980 (Mr Hersh says Mrs Gandhi returned to power in July 1979). These cannot be easily dismissed as oversights because Mr Hersh, by his own admission, had put in four years of hard work into the book and had interviewed over 1,000 persons to get his facts right.

In spite of these flaws, Seymour Hersh has such a reputation as an investigative reporter, especially in matters regarding the CIA, that he cannot be brushed aside lightly. More so, as he insists that he has enough documents with him to support his allegations. And thereby hangs the tale.

THE HERSH REPORT

Here we reproduce excerpts from Seymour Hersh's book, The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House, which refer to Morarji Desai's CIA connections:

 On 2 May, (1971) Nixon made a gesture towards appeasing those in his administration who wanted a strong stand against Pakistan terror (in what is now Bangladesh) by signing an order limiting American aid to spare parts and non-lethal equipment but even that step was mitigated when the President added in his own handwriting: "To all hands, don't squeeze Yahya at this time."

At this time a miraculous new element emerged to buttress the seemingly incomprehensible White House policy: highly classified evidence that Mrs Indira Gandhi was planning to attack East Pakistan. In mid-May Kissinger wrote that he and Nixon had learnt 'from sources heretofore reliable' that Mrs Gandhi had ordered plans for a lightning Israeli-type attack to take over Pakistan. For the next six months, until the final defeat of Yahya Khan at the hands of India, Nixon and Kissinger constantly invoked their 'reliable sources' to justify the White House's hard line towards India. The source was never named for an obvious reason: the informant was reporting from India through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)...The informant was

undoubtedly Morarji Desai, a prominent Indian politician who was fired from the post of deputy prime minister by Indira Gandhi in 1969 but stayed in her cabinet-after a bitter political dispute. Desai was a paid informer for the CIA and was considered one of the agency's most important assets. Former American intelligence officials recall that Desai was a star performer who was paid 20,000 dollars a year by the CIA during the Johnson administration.

---page 449

 I have been able to establish firmly that Desai was reporting through 1970. After that year, the officials who were willing to discuss Desai's information with me were no longer in a position to see his reports, which presumably continued to flow to Washington.

-footnote in page 449 On 13 August 1971 Tad Szulc of The New York Times reported that the United States had received intelligence information from New Delhi that the Soviet Union had agreed to sign the friendship treaty as the price for an indefinite delay in India's plan to recognise East Pakistan. The story upset Richard Helms who telephoned White House and urged them to investigate the leak which he said put his agent's life in danger. The endangered agent was obviously Morarji Desai.
—footnote in page 452

A Special Correspondent

ot very many in the industrial town of Nagda, about 70 km west of Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh, are familiar with the chemistry of toxic gases. The little that they know is of the gas produced at the staple fibre division of Gwalior Rayon Silk Manufacturing Company (GRASIM). It is a sweet-smelling gas which has brought both prosperity and suffering to this Malwa region. It is better known as 'Birla gas.' 'Birla gas' is not half as potent as, perhaps, prussic acid gas which kills almost instantaneously; yet in Nagda today, people die a slow and silent deathit is a price that they pay for a chance to get a job in a factory.

Thirty-eight-year-old Mangi Lal, for instance, has paid a heavy price. Pointing to his left hand he says, "This is not mine." His speech is impaired and it is difficult to follow all that he says. On 15 March this year, Mangi Lal felt a tremor in his left hand and within minutes, there was no sensation at all. When he went to the local Jan Seva hospital the nurse told him that he was drunk. A cursory examination by the doctor on duty was enough to diagnose his case as one of hemiplaegia (partial paralysis) of the left side. It will probably take months, if not years, for Mangi Lal to report for duty at the auxiliary section of the staple fibre division in Nagda where he has been employed since 1967 as a khalasi. He has already spent over Rs 6,000 on his treatment at Nagda and Choiet Ram hospital in Indore. His little, two-roomed house in Birlagram workers' colony is in complete disarray. But Mangi Lal is a comparatively fortunate man: he has only one dependent, a 13-year-old son, to support (his wife died three years ago).

Equally fortunate, if not more, is Kaluram Jain (48) who resigned from his job at the staple fibre laboratory in 1974, after he began to feel that he would die if he continued to work there. "The laboratory where I worked, right from 1962, had too much gas," says Jain. He does not know precisely which gas he is referring to, but he is convinced that his cardiac disease, which was first diagnosed in 1972, was caused by the gas. "The pain became so bad that once I had to be hospitalised for six months at a stretch. My treatment was done at the civil hospital in Ujjain, and finally I was declared unfit for work," he says. Kaluram Jain has filed a suit against the factory management at the labour court in Ujjain, demanding adequate compensation for his physical impairment due to the work environment in the staple fibre division.

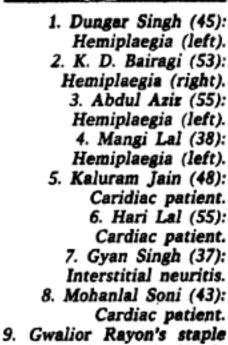
Unlike Jain, 45-year-old Dungar Singh is resigned to fate and to his disease which makes him look twice his age. It is difficult to converse with him because all he can manage to utter, and with considerable diffi-

INVESTIGATION

Nagda's d

Numerous workers in the industrial town of Nagda are exposed division of Gwalior Rayon. Many of them have been crideath. V. T. PADMANABHAN and MAS carbon disulphide, sulphur dioxide



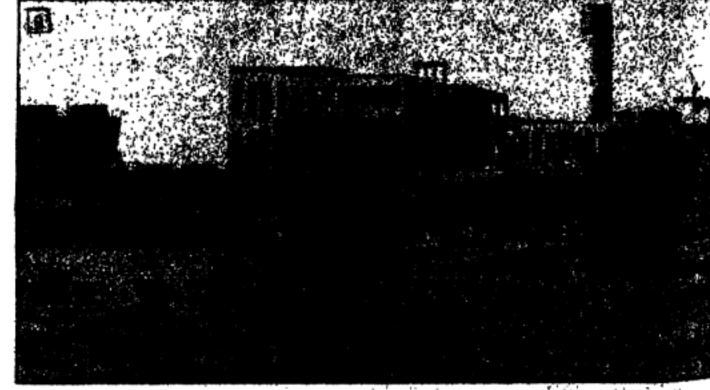


fibre division in Nagda









eadly gas

ery day to the toxic gases that are produced at the staple fibre led, and many more are heading for a slow and silent DDUL HUQ investigate the hazards of and hydrogen sulphide poisoning.













culty, are stray words like 'spinning' and 'CS2.' Dungar Singh's is an acute case of hemiplaegia, diagnosed as paralysis of the left side; but after three years of suffering his entire body seems to have become immobile. Dungar Singh joined the spinning section of the staple fibre division 20 years ago. For the first six years he worked as a badli worker; in 1962 he was appointed on the permanent staff. He became a victim of paralysis in 1980; but, in between his treatment, he managed to attend duty till February 1981. Since then he has remained in bed. He is still on the rolls of the staple fibre division, but on a no-work-no-pay basis. It is unlikely that he will ever return to duty again. Financially, Dungar Singh is in dire straits: no salary and no sickness benefits. The Employees' State Insurance (ESI) paid him half his declared salary every month for the first 309 days after which, as per the rules, the sickness benefit was withdrawn. Today, no one is either accountable or responsible for Dungar Singh's plight.

No one is accountable for the plight of 55-year-old Abdul Aziz either. Wobbling around his halfbuilt house in Gandhinagar colonyfar away from the factory-Aziz has accepted his personal tragedy with a disturbing confidence. In 1954, when he joined the viscose section of the staple fibre division, Aziz did not really know what was in store for him. Nineteen years later, he was rushed to Jan Seva hospital. The diagnosis, once again, was a foregone conclusion: hemiplaegia (left). Like Dungar Singh, Aziz received sickness benefit from the ESI for 309 days. After this, he was left to fend for himself. Aziz resigned his job in

1976.

Mohanlal Soni (43) is a born fighter. An active trade unionist, he is prepared to fight the factory management as well as his heart disease. He joined the staple fibre division in 1960; he is now an operator in the auxiliary section. In 1973, at the age of 33, he had his first stroke. He was hospitalised in Ujjain for three months. In less than a year after rejoining work, Soni was complaining of "chest trouble" once again. The second attack came in December 1982. He spent three months and about Rs 5,000 at Jan Seva hospital. "I had to sell off part of my land and wife's jewellery to clear up my bills," he says. Today, Soni is back on duty. But for how long?

The very same question can be put to Hari Lal (55), an operator in the auxiliary section. He joined the staple fibre division in 1956. In April 1982 he was in Jan Seva hospital, recovering from a heart attack. He reported for duty four and a half months later: two of those months he had spent at the hospital, which cost him over Rs 5,000, and the rest at

home.

If Hari Lal could rejoin work, so

30 30 could Ramesh Chandra Sharma (54), a turner in the factory workshop. Sharma joined the staple fibre division in 1961 and in 1977 he spent 45 days at Jan Seva after suffering a severe heart attack. His medical bills ranup to Rs 2,500. Six years later, he still complains of continuous chest pain.

Gyan Singh (37) is also back on duty in the viscose section where he works as an operator. In May 1981, four years after his appointment, his face was partially paralysed (interstitial neuritis or Bell's palsy). At the cost

of approximately Rs 4,000 and 45 days' sick leave, Singh now manages to make adequate use of his facial muscles.

Laboratory technical assistant S. N. Deolase (43), with a service record of 15 years, is not willing to blame the company. He attributes his two heart attacks, in June 1981 and June 1982, to his "hereditary blood pressure." "The gas has nothing to do with my cardiac trouble," he says. But he does admit that the first stroke itself cost him somewhere in the region of Rs 3,000.

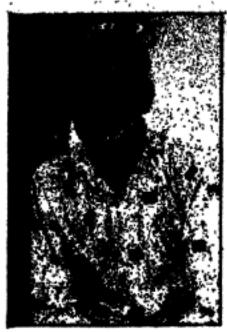
The one man who does not forgive the company is Kanhaiya Das Bairagi (53). He joined the staple fibre division in 1954 in the maintenance section and later rose to the post of senior fitter. In 1976 he became a victim of hemiplaegia (right). After spending three months at the Jan Seva hospital and at home, he rejoined work. His right hand was still partially immobile, and he was compelled to work with just one hand—' the left one. Soon, he was working with just four fingers of his left! hand: the fifth had been cut off by the fibre machine. Bairagi received an ESI compensation of Rs 60 per month for life. Today he runs a small shop on Palya Road in Nagda.

The 45-year-old Maha Deo's paralysis is of a different sort; this coalyard khalasi who joined the staple fibre division in 1963 has been shivering violently for the last four years, and it is unlikely that he will ever be able to work again. His is an

advanced case of Parkinsonism. In the slums of Durgapura colony where Maha Deo lives, his neighbours are awestruck: the common impression is that the poor victim is possessed by some evil spirit. How is it, they ask, that Maha Deo still "trembles," despite prolonged treatment at Jan Seva, the ESI hospital and yet another in Indore?

Bhairo Lal is not given half the attention that Maha Deo attracts in Durgapura. In his early sixties, Bhairo Lal spends his days keeping guard over his mango trees in





Maha Deo (left) and Bhairo: delayed symptoms

Palyagram in the outskirts Nagda. His right side is still partially immobile. His speech is stilted. Not very many in Palyagram can offer detailed information about him: the old man seems to be the concern of just nobody in the village. From his own half-sentences and monosyllables, it is learnt that for 20 long years, Bhairo Lal worked as a badli worker in the carbon disulphide section of the staple fibre division. He gave up his job four years ago. After leaving he became a victim of hemiplaegia (right). Bhairo Lal does not appear to have undergone any systematic treatment for his paralysis. He seems content with the fact that he is still alive.

From Mangi Lal to Bhairo Lal to the hundreds of others who have been, or are still employed with the staple fibre division of Gwalior Rayon, the story is essentially the same. It is the story of what is better known in Nagda as 'Birla gas.'

A detailed analysis of 'Birla gas' and its effect on the 3,000-odd employees of the staple fibre division in Nagda warrants a study of the factory itself and the viscose process of manufacturing fibre. It was in 1951 that work began on this factory. Gwalior Rayon, a Birla company, imported two rayon manufacturing machines from Britain with a total capacity of 7.5 tonnes per day each. In February 1954 the factory went into production: it had a strength of a little over 350 employees. The purpose of this factory was mainly to

feed the Gwalior Rayon weaving division at Birlagram, Gwalior, with staple fibre which was considered an effective substitute to cotton because of its capacity to blend with wool, silk, jute and other synthetic fibres. Discarding the more cumbersome acetate process, Gwalior Rayon settled for the viscose process. Initially, the bamboo/hardwood pulp, required for the manufacture of staple fibre, was bought from outside; so were the other raw materials like caustic soda (sodium hydroxide---NaOH). In 1963, Gwalior

Rayon commissioned its own rayon grade pulp plant in Mavoor (Kerala) to feed the factory at Nagda (another plant came up in 1972 at Harihar, Karnataka). And in October 1972, a chemical division was commissioned at Nagda itself to supply the NaOH required for fibre production.

Meanwhile, in early 1962, an engineering and development division was set up in Nagda to upgrade and facilitate the expansion of the staple fibre division. By 1968, all existing machines had been revamped and new ones installed. Today the factory has an installed capacity of 220 tonnes, and along with the engineering division, it employs about 3,500 people, including the badli workers (the chemical division is a separate entity altogether).

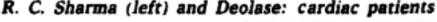
The increase in turnover and the revamping of machines, however, did not ensure any substantial measures to safeguard the health of the employees whose strength is now approximately ten times more than what it was in 1954. Today, the staple fibre division is a gigantic complex, churning out more fibre and more and more toxic, irritant gases that take their toll on the workers. The factory is divided into five main sections:

◆Carbon disulphide (CS₂) section, where the gas is manufactured through a simple process of burning wood charcoal with sulphur in an electrically charged furnace. The byproduct here is sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and hydrogen sulphide (H₂S).

•Sulphuric acid (H₂SO₄) section, where the acid is manufactured through a process of converting SO₂ into SO₃ and reacting it with water with the catalyst, vanadium pentoxide.

•Viscose section, where the pulp is first steeped in caustic soda (supplied by the chemical division) to obtain alkaline cellulose, and then churned in carbon disulphide to obtain viscose.

oSpinning section, where the pulp—now in the form of the honey-like viscose—is pressed through







40

Sample survey: Table I

Concentration (in parts-per-million) of sulphur dioxide in the carbon disulphide plant

| Location/operations | Factory A | Factory B | Factory C | |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| 1. General atmosphere | 33.5 | 31.6 | 12.9 | |
| 2. Charging of coal | 90.8 | 78.9 | 25.7 | |
| 3. Charging of sulphur | 90.8 | 78.9 | 74.7 | |
| 4. Furnace end | 26.3 | 8.0 | 1.6 | |
| 5. Sulphur box | 21.5 | 45.9 | | |

Source: Ministry of labour & employment, 1959 report.

Note: The maximum allowable concentration of SO₂ is 10 ppm.

Sample survey: Table II

Concentration (in parts-per-million) of toxic gases in the spinning acid bath section

| Location/ operations | Factory A | | | Factory B | | |
|--|------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | H ₂ S | CS ₂ | Toge- ther | H ₂ S | CS ₂ | Toge- ther |
| . Spinning bath louse near zinc pot | _ | | _ | 81.4 | 1.7 | 83.1 |
| 2. Spinning acid path near zinc pot nixing tank | 6.4 | 8.6 | 15.0 | 72.1 | 1.5 | 73.6 |
| B. Spinning acid path near zinc pot near filters | 3.0 | 12.2 | 15.2 | 14.6 | 4.0 | 18.6 |

Source: Ministry of labour & employment, 1959 report.

Note: The maximum allowable concentration of H_2S and CS_2 when present together is ten ppm each.

Sample survey: Table III

Concentration (in parts-per-million) of toxic gases in the viscose section

| Location/ operations | Factory B | | | Factory C | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | H ₂ S | CS ₂ | Toge- ther | H ₂ S | CS ₂ | Toge- ther |
| 1. General atmos- phere in churn room | T* | 10.1 | 10.1 | 0.8 | 17.5 | 18.3 |
| 2. Discharging of viscose from churn to mixer | T | 13.4 | 13.4 | 0.8 | ,42.0 | 42.8 |
| 3. Scraping inside the churns | T | 251.9 | 251.9 | 0.8 | 14.0 | 14.8 |
| 4. Simplex stage | T | 3.10 | 3.10 | **** | - | |
| 5. Viscose mixer and blender | T | 1.7 | 1.7 | | 5.7 | 5.7 |
| 6. Viscose ripening room | T | 4.5 | 4.5 | 0.7 | 5.0 | 5.7 |
| 7. Washing filter | 12.9 | 30.2 | 43.1 | 2.0 | 17.4 | 19.4 |

*T indicates traces below 0.5 ppm.

Source: Ministry of labour & employment, 1959 report.

Note: The maximum allowable limit of CS_2 is 10 ppm; together with H_2S it is 20 ppm.

spinnerrets, each the size of a humanfist with 8,000 pores, into a sulphuric acid bath.

 After-treatment section, where the fibre is washed, desulphurised, bleached, dried and packed in the form of bales.

Theoretically, at every stage of viscose fibre production, the byproducts are recirculated so that there is minimum wastage; minimum wastage of by-products implies, in turn, the minimisation of health hazards. For instance, in the CS2 section, the SO₂ by product should be despatched to the H₂SO₄ section to be used in the production of sulphuric acid; H2S should be pumped across to the sister chemical division to be used in the preparation of sodium sulphide (NaSO₄) which can be sold in the market to paper, pulp, detergent and glass industries. The retrieved H2SO4 in the spinning section should be despatched to the adjoining rooms which are sections within their own right (they are known as auxiliary sections) so that the acid can be recirculated.

In theory all this is very fine. Reality, however, is horrifying. There is no way in which the casual visitor can escape 'Birla gas.' The spinning and after-treatment are the worst affected. What enters your system is unseen; it has a pungent. overpowering smell. It leaves you visibly weak, with a throbbing headache and almost-instant nausea. It is then that you realise that over 3,000 men breathe the 'Birla gas' day in and day out, for eight hours at a stretch. You also realise that this very gas escapes into the breathing zone outside where, being as dense as it is, it seeks the lower atmospheric levels, destroying crops (till a few years ago, Gwalior Rayon used to pay 'crop compensation' to neighbouring farmers) and silently killing the inhabitants of Nagda.

It is difficult to imagine the conditions in the CS₂ and H₂SO₄ sections. Visitors, and journalists in particular, are not permitted to enter these sections. But given the nature of chemical reactions in these sections, one can hazard a guess vis-a-vis the concentration of toxic gases in the

breathing zone.

In 1959, the ministry of labour and employment had published an exhaustive, 59-page report entitled Survey of Carbon Disulphide, Hydrogen Sulphide and Sulphur Dioxide Hazards in the Viscose Rayon Industry in India. The report was based on the findings of an enquiry headed by N. S. Mankiker, the then chief adviser of factories. This priceless piece of documentation has since gone virtually underground. However, it is worth mentioning that the reportbased on a survey of four viscose plants—listed psychic, neurological and gastro-intestinal symptoms vis-avis the number of workers and also the parts-per-million (ppm) concentration of toxic gases in the various staple fibre sections (see sample sur-

vey tables).

The abundance of these toxic gases in the work environment warrants a detailed analysis of the effects of each on the workers in the

staple fibre division.

Carbon disulphide: A colourless, sweet-smelling gas which can be liquefied. In the rayon industry it is used for dissolving the bamboo/ hardwood pulp. Its first ever industrial use as a solvent was in the rubber industry. Its toxic effects on the human body were outlined by T. Oliver in Diseases of Occupation

(London, 1916). Oliver mentioned that he had seen a rubber factory in which the windows of the vulcanising room had been barred to keep men from leaping out during a delirious attack. Earlier in 1863, French physician A. Delpech had declared: "He who works in sulphur (CS2) is no longer a man." Subsequently, in his acclaimed work, Three Cases of Acute Mania from Inhaling CS2 (Boston, 1892), F. Peterson hinted at what fellow American scientists. Gordy and Trumper, later outlined in great detail. The Gordy-Trumper enquiry in 1905 concerned 21 cases of CS₂ poisoning, with the following

symptomatology:

 Encephalopathic (varying from lethargy, anxiety states and irritabil-ity to vertigo)—90 per cent of the 21 cases examined.

Diminution or loss of libido—75

per cent.

 Neuropathy (varying degrees)— 70 per cent.

 Eye symptoms (subjective)—67 per cent.

Gastro-intestinal—66 per cent.

 Asthenia, headache, muscular stiffness, dyspnoea-50 per cent.

 Parkinsonism and localised symptoms of central nervous system-55 per cent.

One too many

complete list of deaths due to cardiac arrest among the workers of GRASIM is difficult to obtain. The ESI hospital records are far from adequate; the Jan Seva hospital records are strictly under lock and key (at any rate, the Jan Seva records would only include the names of those patients who died while under treatment at the hospital); the factory management is hardly cooperative; and the Nagda mahapalika (municipality) does not keep track of the deaths that occur outside its jurisdiction (in many cases, the deaths occur in neighbouring Ujjain and Indore where many GRASIM employees go for specialised treatment). A complete list, in any case, would be too long to reproduce here.

The casualty among the workers in the spinning and auxiliary sections is, perhaps, the highest. The following is an incomplete list of

deaths in these sections:

 Sriram Pandit. Age: Early fifties. Number of years in service: Over 20. Post: Operator, auxiliary section. Date and cause of death: About 13 years ago/heart attack.

2. Hussain Mohammad. Age: Late forties. Number of years in service: Over 20. Post: Operator, auxiliary section (later Hussain Mohammad became a contractor). Date and cause of death: 19 May 1980/heart attack.

C. V. Gopalan. Age: Early fifties. Number of years in service: Over 20. Post: Senior operator, spinning section. Date and cause of death: October 1979/heart attack.

4. Madan Sidhnath. Age: Midthirties. Number of years in service: Around 15. Post: Spinner, spinning section. Date and cause of death: 1979/heart attack.

Arvind Nair. Age: Laté forties. Number of years in service: Over 20. Post: Senior operator, spinning section. Date and cause of death: July 1981/heart attack.

Dhani Ram. Age: Early fifties. Number of years in service: Over 20. Post: Senior operator, spinning section. Date and cause of death: Mid-1981/heart attack.

7. Vidya Prasad. Age: 55. Number · of years in service: Over 20. Post: Group leader, spinning section. Date and cause of death: 10 April

1982/heart attack.

Shahabuddin. Age: 55. Number of years in service: About 26. Post: Operator, spinning section. Date and cause of death: 4 January 1983/ heart attack.

The number of deaths in the other sections of GRASIM, is equally disturbing. It is to be noted, once again, that the list is far from

complete:

Madanlal Kaluramji Mawar. Age: Mid-forties. Number of years in service: Over 20. Post: Fitter, maintenance section. Date and cause of death: April 1981/heart attack.

Duli Chand. Age: 51. Number of years in service: Eight. Post: Contract labourer, staple fibre division. Date and cause of death: 26 November 1981/heart attack.

Ramchandra Mali. Age: Late fifties. Number of years in service: Not known. Post: Khalasi, viscose section. Date and cause of death: December 1981/heart attack. (Mali was served with his retirement notice the day before his death; he died at work.)

12. Richpal Singh. Age: 33. Number of years in service: Eight. Post: Watch and ward, staple fibre division. Date and cause of death: 13

June 1981/heart attack.

13. T. K. Kannan. Age: Late forties. Number of years in service: About 20 (with a short break in 1970-71). Post: Welder, carbon disulphide section. Date and cause of death: December 1981/heart attack.

14. Jugan Singh. Age: Early fifties. Number of years in service:

Around ten. Post: Watchman, chemical division. Date and cause of death: January 1982/heart attack. (Jugan Singh died at work, while sitting on a stool.)

Mandloi. Age: Around 50. Number of years in service: Over Post: Assistant, industrial transport. Date and cause of death: Ear-

ly 1982/heart attack.

Premchand Dataram. Age: 40. Number of years in service: Less than 20. Post: Operator, viscose section. Date and cause of death: 26 March 1982/heart attack.

Yunathan. Age: 55. Number of years in service: About 25. Post: Boiler attendant, power house. Date and cause of death: 11 March 1982/heart attack.

18. Vidya Prasad Pande. Age 49. Number of years in service: About 28. Post: Worker, weaving section. Date and cause of death: 10 April

1982/heart attack.

D. S. Dubey. Age: Around 50. Number of years in service: Around Post: Canteen incharge. Date and cause of death: Mid-1982/heart attack.

Madho Singh. Age: Midforties. Number of years in service: Six to seven. Post: Security officer. Date and cause of death: September 1982/heart attack. (Madho Singh died while making a call for an ambulance.)

21. G. A. K. Rao. Age: Around 60. Number of years in service: Over Post: Despatch assistant. Date and cause of death: Mid-1982/heart

attack.

22. Noor Mohammad. Age: 55. Number of years in service: Over 20. Post: Worker, painting department. Date and cause of death: 25 December 1982/heart attack.

23. C. S. Patangia. Age: 28-29. Number of years in service: Aboutsix. Post: Assistant, building department. Date and cause of death: January 1983/heart attack. (Patangia had been married a year ago.)

• Vasomotor symptoms 30 per

Blurring of optic disc—30 per ent.

Carbon disulphide concentrates, by and large, on the human nerves. Once inhaled, it travels from the lungs to the rest of the body along with oxygen. On reaching the nerve tissues, it stays there for as long as 14 hours. His nerve tissues damaged, the exposed worker encounters an endless number of psychological problems. During the first months of exposure, the worker may suffer from a lack of sexual urge, lethargy, weakness, gastro-intestinal disorders, insomnia, and so on; these, however, are merely the early symptoms of CS₂ poisoning. In the advanced stage, his central nervous system can be impaired beyond repair—leading to paralysis and allied diseases like Parkinsonism and interstitial neuritis (Bells palsy). The research on CS2 poisoning is still far from complete. More and more evidences are being detected every now and then.

Hydrogen Sulphide: A foulsmelling, irritant gas. It is generally credited with asphyxia (choking). But American scientist H.W. Haggard claimed in 1925 that free H₂S in the human blood acts upon the nerve tissues throughout the body: in small doses it depresses the nervous system; in large amounts, like CS₂, it paralyses the nervous system.

Sulphur dioxide: This irritant gas attacks the respiratory system in the main (J.A. Homes, etc, 1915). When inhaled, it does not move beyond the lungs: it goes out with the exhaled air. However, on its way out, it injures the airway passage (bronchioli). Continued exposure to SO₂ results in acute breathing problems. The early symptoms of SO_2 poisoning are dry cough and chronic bronchitis. In 60 to 70 per cent of chronic bronchitis cases, the patients also suffer from chronic gastritis—a relationship that medical science has yet to explain. In the advanced stages, the patients become victims of cardiac disorder: this is a result of breathing trouble—when the air passage is under strain, the heart gives way after being overworked to pump out the impure blood.

The staple fibre division at Nagda L was once described by a prominent local leader as the "slaughter-house of man." It has often been the topic for heated debate in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly. A local advocate, Babu Lal Bharti, has even taken Gwalior Rayon to court for inflicting severe damage on the workers, local residents and agricultural produce (the case is still pending). Over the years, countless number of GRASIM workers have died, either during service or immediately after retirement. The cause of death: advanced hemiplaegia (paralysis) or cardiac arrest.

. There have been, and there are still, innumerable cases of delayed symptoms of gas poisoning. But so far no proper investigation has been conducted in Nagda. A thorough probe into the staple fibre plant and the working conditions therein is undoubtedly a difficult proposition. Nothing short of a government agency or representative can have access to every corner of the factory. Secondly, the workers themselves are mortified to speak against the management or their working conditions. Even the retired employees are guarded in their views because most of them nurture the hope that their children will find gainful employment in the factory (Gwalior Rayon follows an unwritten policy of inducting the children of ex-employees who have served the company "with single-minded devotion"). The local Employees' State Insurance (ESI) hospital, like any other government hospital, is of little help to the curious outsider: it has not one specialist on its staff, not one doctor qualified in industrial hygiene, no proper records of its policy holders (all workers of the staple fibre division are required, by regulation, to be members of the ESI scheme), no methodical case histories, and no updated death lists. In any case, very few workers actually report to the ESI hospital for treatment. They only go there if and when they need to have sick leave or medical allowance sanctioned officially (only the ESI is authorised to do this). They prefer to have themselves treated at the Jan Seva hospital, a trust floated by the Birlas, where record books and case histories are hidden away like priceless jewels.

The problems of a thorough probe are further compounded by the fact that most of the early symptoms of CS₂, H₂S and SO₂ poisoning—symptoms like headaches, weakness, insomnia, lack of sexual urge—are dismissed by most of the local doctors as routine complaints. There is no qualified doctor in Nagda, and perhaps only a few in the country, who can really diagnose these cases and venture to unearth the cause behind them. In any case, the factory management has always taken the stand that these ar€ "common" complaints, universally-known and accepted in urban and semi-urban areas—complaints which can be easily rectified by Calmpose (a very frequently prescribed medicine in Nagda), vitamins and milk (both are supplied every day by the factory to the workers in the more "sensitive" sections like CS₂). The alarming number of cases with early symptoms has somehow never perturbed the management.

Given the general constraints and the seemingly questionable nature/ source of the early symptoms, Sun-DAY was compelled to restrict its investigation to the advanced cases of gas poisoning among the workers of the staple fibre division. It may, perhaps, be difficult for the management to dismiss these advanced cases as universally-known and accepted complaints in urban and semi-urban areas, as much as it would be difficult to overlook the list of recent casualties among the factory employees due to cardiac failure (see box, One too many).

In Birlagram and Durgapura colonies of Nagda there is no dearth of cardiac patients; in the officer's colony within the factory premises, there are, perhaps, many more. For instance the president of GRASIM, Mr Indu Parekh (effectively the chief executive of the company) is himself a heart patient. The manager of the chemical division, Mr Uppal is another case in question. But neither they nor most of the affected workers are willing to talk. The company, like the machine in E.M. Forster's classic, The Machine Stops, commands both fear and respect.

It is unlikely that the wheels of a giant industry can be stopped for the sake of mere mortals. But, perhaps, GRASIM could have paid heed to the six main recommendations (out of a total of 21) listed in the 1959 report:

1. The workers in the churnroom (viscose section) should use respirators while the churns are being emptied and cleaned.

 The workers in the retort rooms must be provided with suitable respirators and goggles for the protection of their lungs and eyes from the irritant fumes of SO₂.

Air conditioning and refrigerative cooling is recommended for the

spinning section.

4. Routine examination of CS₂ and H₂S concentrations in the breathing zone of the workers should be carried out to detect any faults in the system and attempts made to keep the concentration of each below 20 ppm.

5. Routine medical examination of allworkers exposed to these chemicals should be carried out and results recorded on properly designed forms, at least once in every six

months.

6. Restricted hours of work are recommended to shorten the length of exposure. An ideal to achieve should be five hours in a day and not more than two and a half hours at a time (based on the British Standards—Factory Department Memorandum, 1943).

Far from implementing these recommendations, the company has started production of a new fibre, Grassicrimp, which is considered even more hazardous for the workers. In the after-treatment section where wasted chemicals are retrieved, the rate of retrieval for Grassicrimp is 30 per cent less than that of ordinary staple fibre.

As for routine medical check-ups, this is not merely a recommendation. The Indian Standards Institution (ISI) has stipulated (15:5685 of 1970) Your home ... it's beautiful, but are the items in it insured?



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SIMOES-D/OFGI/2/83

'The factory is safe'

The GRASIM management is now preoccupied with its rural development schemes and the effluent plant that it has set up to combat water pollution. Both are flaunted before the outsider, regardless of whether or not they are related to his area of interest. The other preoccupation is with the centre's policy to grant Open General Licences (OGL) for the import of rayon fibre. Mr T. N. Tandon, vice-president (sales and administration) is at pains to explain the adverse effects of the government's policy on the indigenous rayon industry: "Our production has dropped appreciably over the years. With an installed capacity of 220 tonnes, today we are only able to churn out roughly 120 tonnes. Who is there to question the wisdom of OGL?"

It takes sometime for Mr Tandon and his factory manager, Kanwar Kishori Lal, to get to the point. But once on the subject on toxic gases and their effects on the exposed employees of GRASIM, they are far from diffident. "There is a lot of talk about impotence and so on," says Kishori Lal, "It has been brought to our notice. Sometime back, we interrogated a worker who was claiming to be impotent. We discovered that his wife had borne a child barely a few months ago.

Now what do you say to that?"

Both Messrs Tandon and Lal are convinced that the gases present in the breathing zone in the factory and outside, are also present in other industrial towns; their concentration, perhaps, is also the

same. "However, we do take steps to safeguard the interests of our employees," says Mr Tandon. These "steps," according to him, include the free distribution of vitamin tablets and milk among workers who may be exposed to the gases for longer periods of time. "We also try to minimise wastage," the factory manager adds hastily. "For instance, we retrieve two tonnes of sulphur everyday from the sulphur dioxide generated. So where is the question of sulphur dioxide poisoning? The gas has to exist in the atmosphere to take a toll on the workers." Mr Lal explains that, at any rate, the exhaust systems are such that the toxic gases are thrown out "high into the atmosphere." However, he cannot explain how this measure helps, considering that all three toxic gases, carbon disulphide, hydrogen sulphide and sulphur dioxide, are much more dense than the atmosphere and therefore, no matter how "high up" they are despatched, they tend to settle for the lowest possible level.

The 1959 report by the ministry of labour and employment does not cut ice with the GRASIM management. "The report was hardly valid, even at that point in time," says Mr Tandon. Reason: It was not based on scientific tests. Besides, argues Mr Lal, the recommendations of the report were not adopted by any factory in India or abroad. "Times have changed," he claims. "The viscose process of manufacturing rayon fibre has undergone many changes also. The report, even if it was applicable then, has no rele-

vance now." When asked to elaborate on the "many changes" since 1959, Mr Lal can list only two: churn lining in the viscose section, and the replacing of the retort process with the electrical furnace process in the manufacture of carbon disulphide. "In 1973, a survey was conducted by the government, and they were satisfied with our work environment," adds Mr Lal. And surely, unlike the 1959 probe, the one in 1973 was based on proper scientific tests? "Yes," says Mr Lal emphatically.

Dismissing the recommendations of the 1959 report, Mr Lal says that recommendations should not undermine the running of an industry. "How can we have five-hour days for the workers? This is impractical. I mean, nowhere in the world do you have five-hour work days." He does not explain the loss which the factory might incur if the shifts are reduced by three clear hours. Nor does he mention the fact that elsewhere, the working hours may not be less, but adequate measures are taken to safeguard the health of the workers. Are workers in the staple fibre division at Nagda provided with respirators? No. Are they given masks to wear during work? "Only in emergency cases." Are regular atmospheric tests conducted on the shop-floor? No. Do the employees go through periodic medical check-ups? No. But there is plenty of milk and vitamin tablets circulating in the factory. "Milk," says Kishori Lal, "is good for gastrointestinal problems.'

that "workers exposed to CS2 should be examined frequently by a physician acquainted with the hazards involved. The periodic examination should include standardised measurement of blood pressure, sample observation of the reflexes and queries as to the symptoms indicating poisoning." To begin with, the company has not initiated any measures for routine medical examination of the employees (the Jan Seva hospital, however, does send with much fanfare, frequent 'mobile hospitals' to the surrounding villages as part of its 'rural health plan'). Secondly, as mentioned earlier, there are no qualified industrial hygiene specialists to do justice to the employees' complaints. Even the well-equipped Jan Seva has no such specialist. This hospital is headed by a surgeon, Dr D.R. Sonar (FRCS) whose knowledge of toxic gases is adequately displayed when, with one sweeping statement he reduces to

dust and debris all the research that has been done so far on CS2, H2S and SO₂ poisoning. Says Dr Sonar, "I have done my own studies on the subject and take it from me, these gases are not at all harmful. Do you know what the real problem is? These workers have been pampered. They lead cushy lives. The industry is such that they have no manual labour to do. They just operate machines and they've become lazy. All this talk about impotence...I too live in the same atmosphere. Look at my age. I'm suffering from high blood pressure. But give me two women at night and I'll put all those men to shame."

The Jan Seva hospital boasts of a 102-member staff, a mobile ECG unit, and a very sophisticated intensive cardiac unit which, by itself, testifies to the alarming number of heart cases in Nagda. But it is not a factory hospital. According to Dr Sonar, 40 per cent of the beds are

free-but only for the villagers (yet another 'rural health scheme'). GRA-SIM employees have to pay for their treatment. The charges are steep, and the hospital, therefore, only attracts the cases of delayed symptoms from among the staple fibre employees (see case studies). While most of the workers prefer selfmedication for the seemingly harmless early symptoms, some do go for treatment to the ESI hospital. The state of affairs here is aptly summed up by the hospital doctor, Kamlesh Nigam: "A good number of workers who come to us attribute their sickness to the gases. We have no idea as to what is happening inside the factory. What we offer is just symptomatic diagnosis and cure." (Interestingly, Dr Nigam was unaware that the central government had published an exhaustive report on the hazards of the gases. "Could I have a copy of the report?" he asked as an after-thought.)

Punjab can still be saved

By Pran Chopra

he verbal warfare between the Prime Minister and her son on the one hand and the leaders of the Akali Dal on the other, has become sharper. Mr Rajiv Gandhi has accused Pakistan of having a hand in the Akali agitation. Such allegations, true or false, might or might not be fair tactics in domestic political warfare. But that they were made only a few days before the Indian foreign minister left for Islamabad for a crucial round of talks with his opposite number in Pakistan does not speak very well of Mr Gandhi's sense of responsibility.

However, the Akali leaders have again created space for negotiations by postponing the next round of their agitation until 17 June and by putting off a much publicised programme of training volunteers in the mean time. This is one indication that disaster can still be headed off.

But there are others as well.

A recent visit to Patiala, and conversations with Hindus and Sikhs of different types of political interest and commitment, has convinced me of three very encouraging things. The most encouraging among them is that although relations between Hindus and Sikhs are becoming strained very rapidly, they have not—as yet—deteriorated as much as I had feared after reading newspaper reports of clashes in Patiala early in May.

It is true that fanatical and probably politically motivated groups in both communities took out, and in a most provocative manner, religious processions for which there was no justification in the established customs of either community. The resulting tension was then used by some unemployed vagabonds, both Hindus and Sikhs, who live by extorting protection money from shop-keepers of both communities. Sparks

flew. Some shops were burnt, the police went into action (but much too late, says everyone) and there were casualties. I need not go into details; the pattern is sickeningly familiar, and was fully repeated. But obviously all this could happen only because the local situation was ripe for it.

But there was unhesitating expression of confidence by people of both communities, ordinary as well as leading citizens, and at separate as well as joint meetings with them, that these troubles have not affected the broad current of relations between the city's Hindus and Sikhs, and mutual goodwill continues to be great in a city which has a good record of civic peace. The infection is only in some troubled spots and groups, and the position in the villages, they think, is even better.

In other cities the position is not as good but also not as bad as I had feared. One powerful beneficial consequence of this is that still there are many prominent citizens of both communities, respected and trusted not only by their own community but by the opposite one as well, who are willing to pool forces, come to a common platform and jointly raise their voices in support of sane solutions of the state's problems. Of course this willingness would not be enough by itself and would differ little from pious platitudes if it were not accompanied also by agreement on which solutions would be "sane." But there is broad agreement on this as well.

Such an agreement would also not be enough by itself if it were confined to a few people who by training and habit and freedom from political biases have a privileged ability to take an objective view of things. They would be drowned in a sea of prejudice. But the second encouraging thing I saw is that compared with only a few months ago, there is far less disagreement now between the Hindus and Sikhs about the four main demands which have been raised by the Akali Dal.

There are many unauthorised versions of these demands, some ridiculous, some ominous, and they are further distorted by populist rhetoric in the Golden Temple, some of which is thoroughly irresponsible if not deliberately mischievous. But in the negotiations with the government of India the Akali Dal itself has

Mrs Gandhi with Darbara Singh (extreme left): manipulative politics?



put forward, and that too in writing,

only the following four.

First, about river waters. The Akali Dal claims that the waters of the Punjab rivers were unfairly divided in favour of Haryana when the latter was separated from the former in the mid-1960s. But far from demanding a specific or increased share for Punjab, what the Akali Dal demands is only that the dispute be put before the tribunal envisaged in the law passed by Parliament some years ago precisely for dealing with such disputes, and the Akalis have given a public commitment that they will accept the tribunal's award.

Second, about territories. The Akali Dal demands that Chandigarh, which Mrs Gandhi turned into a Union Territory and joint capital of Punjab and Haryana, should be given to Punjab as its capital, and other territorial disputes between Punjab and Haryana should be referred to a boundary commission, whose decision it has promised to accept. The Akalis say, and most people agree, that Chandigarh was built primarily for Punjab, in the early 1950s, as the capital of Punjab. It was meant to take the place of Lahore in the ethos of the refugees, who were driven out of Pakistan; and they do not live in Haryana today but in Punjab.

Third, about centre-state relations.

As many other parties have done before and after it, the Akali Dal demands a review of the sharing of financial and other powers between the centre and the states. It agrees that the appointment of the Sarkaria Commission substantially meets this demand, but like other parties too it wants the commission's terms announced quickly and its membership expanded to include economic, political and constitutional experts. It also wants, though it does not demand, some kind of acknowledgment that the commission has been appointed in response to the demand made by the Akali Dal as well as by others. In the fourth category are some religious demands. Since Mrs Gandhi has announced acceptance of most of them, the only Akali pressure now regarding them is that the announcement should be implemented (it has not been implemented with regard

to even one demand as yet) and the

remaining demands should be dis-

cussed quickly.

The government is shirking a solution to the (Punjab) problem because the Congress is busy calculating where its electoral advantage lies among the Hindus. But a situation is developing in which the Congress might well lose the Sikh vote irretrievably without winning any substantial section of the Hindu vote if Hindu opinion continues to shift as it is doing with regard to the demands (of the Akalis).

Intil quite recently, Hindu opinion in Punjab was either indifferent or hostile to these demands and considered them to be an issue between the Akali Dal and the government. The responsibility for this attitude is partly of the communal rhetoric in which some of the Akalis dress the demands, partly of the manipulative politics of Mrs Gandhi, who is doing everything to misrepresent the Akali demands and to confuse the Hindus for the sake of weaning them away from the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), and partly of the narrow-mindedness many Punjabi Hindus have often shown in the past regarding the affairs of Punjab, for example in disowning Punjabi as their mother tongue in the 1961 census, which is the root cause of many of Punjab's problems today.

But now most Hindus agree that these are or should be the demands of whole of Punjab and they are not communal in substance even if they might be so in the manner they are presented by some Akali Dal leaders. In fact, many political parties whose main base in Punjab is among the Hindus are beginning to say more forcefully that communal peace in Punjab is as necessary for the Sikhs as for the Hindus and of course for the future welfare of Punjab as a whole. The latest example is the statement to this effect on 15 May by one of the leaders of the Akali Dal and president of the highest religious organisation of the Sikhs, the Sikh Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, Mr G.S. Tohra. The change that has come over Punjab in this respect in recent months is quite remarkable.

Good though this change is, even better is its consequence, that it has opened the way for a non-communal, non-partisan and non-party approach to the controversies which are thre-

atening the preservation of peace in Punjab. It is possible for all parties now to rise above party considerations in considering the Akali demands dispassionately because no party would lose votes to another party by doing so. Hence the satisfaction one can take in the third encouraging thing I saw: the potency, or at least the potential for it, which has been conferred upon the effort which is being currently made by a number of prominent Punjabis in Punjab and in Delhi to evolve a wide consensus behind a "sane solution" to the current controversy over the Akali demands.

Hitherto they were groping in a vacuum, or in the darkness of the dissensions within and between parties on this issue, guided only by their common sense and sincerity. Now they have at least a chance to bring all parties to a consensus, perhaps on a non-party or (which means the same thing in effect) an all-party platform. I came away with the distinct impression that there is time as yet, and the time is now, to salvage the future of Punjab from a possible communal holocaust if the saner elements on both sides take this chance of asserting themselves to press for sensible agreements.

The fly in the ointment, however, continues to be Mrs Gandhi. So desperate is her need for Hindu votes in Punjab that she continues to make the false charge, without giving a shred of evidence in support, that the Akalis keep shifting their stand on their demands. Equally false is the union home minister's propaganda that the Akalis have not responded to many counter-offers and compromise solutions which have been presented to them. The fact is that the government has not made a single response on its own through any channel which is either official or carries acceptable credentials of authority. The government is shirking a solution to the problem because the Congress is busy calculating where its electoral advantage lies among the Hindus. But a situation is developing in which the Congress might well lose the Sikh vote irretrievably without winning any substantial section of the Hindu vote if Hindu opinion continues to shift as it is doing with regard to the demands.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi has accused Pakistan of having a hand in the Akali agitation. Such allegations, true or false, might or might not be fair tactics in domestic political warfare. But that they were made only a few days before the Indian foreign minister left for Islamabad for a crucial round of talks does not speak very well of Mr Gandhi's sense of responsibility.

CORPORATE CASTEISM IN INDIA

By RALPH BUULTJENS

An intense controversy surrounds the recent purchases of shares in Indian public companies by expatriates. Because of the international nature of this controversy, Sunday asked Prof. Ralph Buultjens, an international authority on finance and investment, to give his views. Professor Buultjens has been a perceptive observer of the Indian political economy for thirty years. Born in Sri Lanka, he now lives in the United States and teaches international politics and economics at several universities around the world.

ecent events in the world of high finance in India give extraordinary insights into the behaviour and attitudes of the Indian business establishment. The actions of leaders of commerce and industry, strangely different from the norms they generally claim to espouse, also raise some disturbing financial, legal and moral questions, which, above all, concern the character and capacity of the highest level of business management in India.

For a considerable time, successive Indian governments and Indian businessmen have been urging expatriates to invest in local enterprises. The response has been modest, until, within the past year, the government offered certain tax concessions to encourage this flow of foreign earned capital into India. This tax policy then met with almost universal approval by the Indian business community. Following the law, and in no way contravening either its intent or its provisions, a London based Indian businessman, Swraj Paul, purchased significant blocks of shares in India's fourth and tenth largest companies-Delhi Cloth & General Mills Company (DCM) and Escorts Limited.

And then, the floodgates of criticisms opened. The chairman of DCM and Escorts, whose families (the Shrirams and Nandas) were presumed by the public to own large shareholdings in their own companies, reacted hysterically. They assailed Swraj Paul and maligned his motives in language bordering on the abusive. A collective panic seemed to have afflicted the higher echelons of Indian corporate executives. As the establishment closed ranks behind the Nandas and Shrir-

ams, a phalanx of the most powerful industrialists issued statements of concern.

J.R.D. Tata, K.N. Modi, Ashok Jain, Hari Shankar Singhania, L.M. Thapar, H.C. Kothari and others of similar eminence attacked Swraj Paul's purchases. Delegations of powerful industrialists rushed to demand government protection from this type of investment. Chambers of Commerce made denunciations. Company lobbyists, who lurk near the centre of power, worked overtime to obtain reassurances and protection for their masters. Elements of the press and even politicians were mobilized in their support.

These are uncharacteristic of the Indian business hierarchy. This elite is normally cautious, anxious not to discuss corporate affairs too freely in public, discreet in revealing their ties with high government and political figures, and incessant in their complaints about government interventions in business. For the establishment to violate all of these norms in a period of a few weeks suggests the distraction to which they are driven. A bemused public is beginning to ask questions—and these deserve examination.

Underlying the whole establishment response is an apparent concern with expatriate acquisition of blocks of shares in local companies. Expatriate investment, the public is now told, represents a force for instability and brings a dangerous element of speculation. It is difficult to understand these charges for two reasons.

First, expatriate investment was frequently solicited by those who now denounce it. They made no charges when enabling legislation was considered by the government.

Second, any stock market is largely based on speculation. Since the shares of DCM and Escorts were traded on stock exchanges long before expatriates became interested in them, allegations of speculation seem spurious. In addition, whatever speculation there has been recently has added to the market value of DCM and Escort shares, surely a matter of joy for those who own them.

Why, then, this concern about expatriates? Perhaps there is a deeper and more subtle explanation than that which is publicly proclaimed. The whole expatriate issue could well be a smokescreen to disguise a more fundamental issue: the matter of who actually owns many Indian businesses and who exercises operating control of them. It is these areas, and the linkage between the two, that are the heart of corporate darkness in the world of Indian high finance. More specifically, then, it is the position of the defenders of the status quo that deserves careful examination, rather than the motives of the invaders.

There are three critical financial questions that are basic criteria for evaluating the performance of corporate management, especially in India.

First, what is the relationship of ownership to management?

Second, what are the sources of capital employed by companies?

Third, what is the return which management provides to shareholders? Each of these questions are particularly valid in the context of the DCM-Escorts situation.

The recent controversy has exposed a surprising fact. Most observers of Indian business assumed that families who controlled management also controlled large shareholdings. Apparently, they once did. This is no longer so. Shriram family holdings do not amount to more than ten percent of DCM stock and the Nandas own about the same proportion of Escorts. Evidently, over the years, both families have converted many of their shares into cash by selling them to the public. Now, they are essentially minority shareholders.

Yet, this liquification of their holdings has not reduced their control of these companies. Both Shrirams and Nandas are in complete charge of management, enjoy all the considerable perquisites of office, and employ an assortment of relatives as highly paid executives. This is the best of all possible worlds—cash in hand and jobs in hand, corporate comforts and family plannings! As this situation becomes exposed, so does the vulnerability of manage ment and a different perception of their tenacity for office begins to emerge. One also begins to ask whether this condition is reflected in other major Indian companies.

If so little of equity capital now belongs to the erstwhile owners (who

are now managers), another question arises: What are the principal sources of equity capital currently employed? A further surprise. About one-half (54 per cent of Escorts and 45 per cent of DCM) of shares in these companies are owned by public financial institutions. These institutions, which include organisations such as the Life Insurance. Corporation and the General Insurance Corporation and the Unit Trust of India and others, are essentially government sponsored entities. Their purpose is to invest and protect public funds and to provide capital for national development. In effect, they are trustees and conduits for public money.

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Consequently, every taxpayer and many Indians who are not, have become indirect shareholders in Escorts, DCM and other business enterprises. Estimates indicate that almost 20 per cent of the stock equity in public companies is owned by these institutions. A number of issues arise. No longer can executives of many major companies consider themselves responsible only to shareholders-they are now guardians of the public trust and accountable to the citizenry of India. There is no way in which these managers can now pretend that they are operating within the guidelines of the old entrepreneurial system—new responsibilities arise when public money is substituted for private funds, and when this category of

capital is at risk in business. In this context, return to shareholders becomes most important. "I built this company," says Escorts chairman Nanda in an interview indicating that he will fight vigorously to keep control. However, this is an attitude suggesting perceptions of nostalgia in a corporate world where perceptions of performance are more valid. Swraj Paul, as a recent investor, indicates deep dissatisfaction with the rate of return on capital employed by both Escorts and DCM. If, by his agitation, he can raise this level, it will be a public service. Management of all companies employing public money do need constant reminders that every extra emolument or family perquisite is extracted from the public pocket. Perhaps it is time for the Indian government to appoint a commission of inquiry into the rate of return earned by companies of this nature and whether their financial practices conform to internationally accepted standards of probity.

As the managements of Escorts and DCM respond to Swraj Paul's purchase of shares, they have sought to use legal instrumentalities to reinforce their positions. Foremost among these is the declared intent of the chairmen of both companies not to register the transfer of shares from prior owners to Swraj Paul. Under the provisions of their legal charters this is technically possible.

However, refusal to register transfer constitutes an action with enormously detrimental consequences to both the company and its shareholders. It is primarily a repudiation of a negotiable public instrument, as if a government was to renege on a currency note-calling into question all other similar instruments. In this way, repudiation devalues the stock of every shareholder and erodes investor confidence. Since so much DCM and Escorts stock is held by public institutions, refusal to register could even be seen as a kind of fraud on the public interest.

In addition, this action smacks of a discrimination which is a violation of constitutional and natural law. It suggests that the management is prepared to damage the company's interest in order to protect its personal interest. If no other significant share transfers have been rejected recently, discrimination is reinforced with evidence of arbitrary action, calling into judicial question the whole area of management conduct and competence.

In no other nation would this type of managerial authoritarianism be permissible. Thus, it is also a matter of India's standing in the financial markets of the world, a standing that can affect even the government's capacity to borrow abroad.

It is strange that the management of DCM and Escorts would resort to a public threat of this nature. A natural reaction by the average citizen is that the management must have either a great deal to fear or to conceal. By provoking these emotions, both the chairmen have done their companies and the Indian world of business no service

A final legal observation. Chairman Nanda has declared: "I am also telling my dealers and ancillaries that they may have to help out by buying Escorts shares." This line of thought extended into action indicates the management's heedless pursuit of a conflict of interests and a massive attempt to exert undue influence on employees or those having a business relationship with Escorts. On both judicial and moral grounds these are eminently unfair policies that courts of law are likely to find highly questionable.

Ultimately, the management of any company is only as secure as the confidence it evokes from its shareholders. Recourse to legal technicalities, even if judicially sustainable, is almost a defeat in every sense. As, indeed, is a sale of shares by those who are not under any financial pressure to sell. In these circumstances a self-questioning attitude may be more revealing than either technical defences or public castigation of shareholders.

India has always been a nation deeply concerned with moral issues and moral consequences. That is why, in the final reckoning, the

attitudes of DCM and Escorts managements, and of the Indian business establishment, cause a sense of unease that goes far beyond the financial and legal dimensions—into the area of moral accountability.

What are the responsibilities of corporate managements? Are they primarily personal or are they primarily to shareholders and the public? If they are to the shareholders and the public, then there is a managerial duty not only to maximise profit and to provide a generous return, but also to behave in a manner that is above taint and suspicion. Public money is a trust and trustees must either use it with care or retreat into the less demanding world of private money, where the savings of others are not at stake.

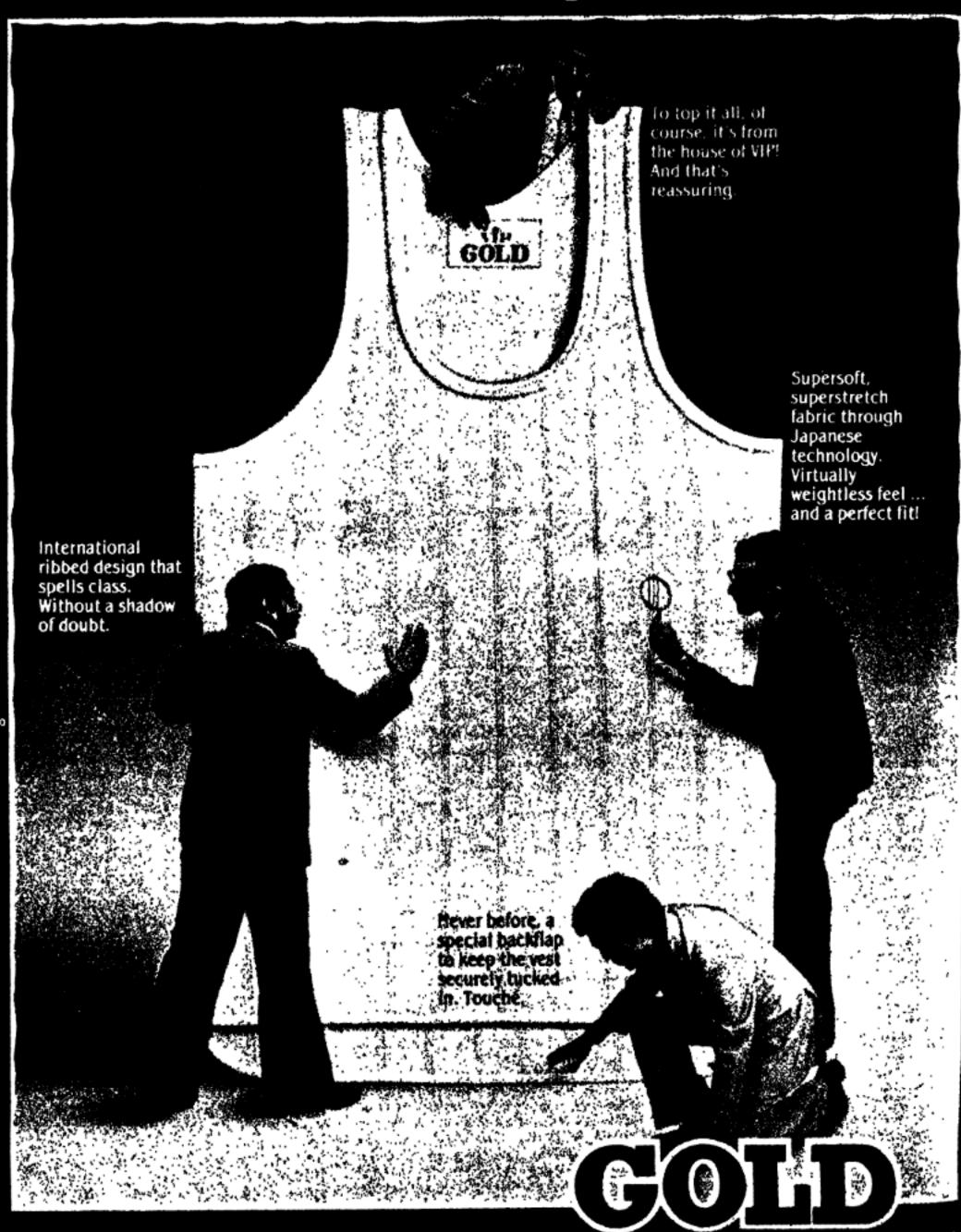
In modern society, there is another demand of corporate management. Large numbers of young people now enter the business professions. Their career expectations are often modelled on the paradigms of successful, older leaders of commerce and industry. These leaders have a duty to their country and to their calling to conduct themselves in ways that inspire another generation. If the present image of corporate sector baronies continues, and this is an image not diminished by recent events, the future development of Indian business and the cadres of managerial talent it can attract will be retarded.

The Indian business elite knows, almost better than anyone else today, that building a national economy requires greater equity participation by the average citizenry. The whole concept of the joint-stock company is predicated on this assumption: wide-based share ownership and dispersal of stock among the community at large, provides a sense of belonging, of support, of protection against political and other vagaries. It is also one of the proven routes to capital mobilisation and nation-building. In this context, discouraging ownership is somewhat akin to discouraging national growth. Both by example and by commitment, the Indian business community has a special responsibility in this area—a responsibility that should not be exercised in reverse!

A final word. In law and in fact, India has tried very hard to rid itself of the curse of caste. It exists, but it earns its practitioners a moral opprobium—a stigma far greater than the untouchability of caste itself.

In hastening to support members of the elite, in endorsing some of their questionable activities, the Indian business hierarchy risks being indicted with perpetuating a new casteism—one set of standards for the elite group and another for outsiders. Right now, the court of public opinion is watching. It will be a sad day for all Indians if the activities of a few businessmen result in the verdict: "Guilty as charged."

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LOOKING GLASS

Vasantdada gets a second home





Shalinitai and Vasantdada Patil: a fair exchange

The Patils-chief minister Vasantrao Patil and his wife Shalinitai-are exchanging more than just their electoral constituencies among themselves. As a minister in Babasaheb Bhosale's cabinet Mrs Patil was allotted a spacious bungalow with a garden at Foreshore Road, a stone's throw from the Mantralaya, the state secretariat. Although she did not find a place in the cabinet after her husband replaced Bhosale as the CM, she continued to occupy the bungalow. Now, she is not even an MLA, having resigned to make way for her husband to contest the seat she held. (Vasantrao Patil, who is a member of the Parliament, has to be a member of the Assembly if he is to continue as the CM.) In spite of this Shalinitai has not vacated the bungalow. Normally, this would have cost her a fortune since she was required to pay rent at the ruling market rates. The rent according to present rates would be around Rs 10,000 a month considering the size and the location of the bungalow that Mrs Patil is occupying. But her husband has come to her rescue: he has requisitioned the bungalow for the CM's use although he already has a one-storeyed bungalow, Varsha, on Ridge Road. Presumably, Mr Patil, wanting to avoid the city traffic, has decided to have a second home near the Mantralaya, in the bargain leaving his wife undisturbed.

Shivaji is forgotten

The Maharashtra government seems to have lost interest in Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha empire. For years the government has been trying to bring out an official biography of the Maratha ruler. Historian D.V. Potdar was first entrusted with the task. But as he could not complete it, it was passed on to another historian, Prof. B.H. Khare. Mr Khare, however, had to go as it was found at a late stage that he was unequal to the task. Former chief minister A.R. Antulay who tried to win the Maratha support by going all out to revive the greatness of Shivaji, appointed three historians to bring out the biography and allocated Rs 300,000 for the project. The historians spent a lot of money: one of them, a politician, even toured Europe searching for material for the biography. Their heydays, however, ended abruptly when Babasaheb Bhosale became the CM. And, that was the end of the biography as well. Nothing is being heard on the subject since then. Shivaji, apparently, can wait.

North-east insurgents may unite

The insurgent groups in the north-east, which have been reduced to shambles by the relentless campaigns of the security forces, are now planning to unite for their survival. Already two underground outfits—the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) led by Muivah and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of Manipur led by Temba Singh-have decided to pool their resources together and conduct their operations jointly. Muivah, who was once a staunch supporter of A. Z. Phizo and whom he deserted later to have his own outfit, is facing problems with another top leader in the organisation, Isaac Swu. The PLA in Manipur also received a severe blow following the arrest of its top leader, Biseswar Singh, and the death of almost all other top ranking leaders over the years in armed encounters with the security forces. By joining hands the leaders of these two underground organisations may have set the trend for other insurgent groups to follow. Another insurgent group of Manipur, the Prepak, is also negotiating with the NSCN for an alliance. It was the PLA's Biseswar Singh, now in a jail near Imphal, who had mooted the idea of a united front of the insurgent groups operating in the northeast in 1981 but could not get far with the idea as Muivah was reluctant to join hands with other groups. Now some of the militant agitators of Assam too seem to be convinced that unless such a united front was forged there was no future for the insurgents in the north-east.

Health problems cripple IT department

The income-tax department's intelligence and investigation wings have now got bosses who are not keeping good health. By some coincidence, three top people in these sensitive wings, whose jobs entail considerable touring, are suffering from various health problems which may be hampering their capacity to undertake strenuous jobs. Mr K. R. Raghavan, the newly appointed director general (investigations), recently underwent surgery in connection with a serious illness. Mr D. N. Chaudhury, director of investigations (north and east), is suffering from an eye ailment, which made him take prolonged leave recently. The director (intelligence) Mr D. C. Kohli, had met with a serious accident a few years back, due to which he has an ailment in his leg. Apparently all these officers are being forced to undertake what is assigned to them totally disregarding their health. One wonders if at the time of their appointments, the Central Board of Direct Taxes had taken the health aspect of these officers into account.

New job for former HAL chief

B.K. Kapoor, former chairman of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), who left the undertaking amidst a great deal of controversy in February, may now join as the head of another public sector undertaking, the Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC) at Ranchi. He was believed to have been removed, as HAL's chairman on a directive from the Prime Minister saying that all superannuated or inefficient heads of public sector undertakings should be retired. But soon after his removal, Mr Kapoor's name came up for consideration as the chairman of Indian Airlines. It now appears that what is bad for HAL is good for HEC.

RELIGION

Kerala bears the cross of communalism

Hindu-Christian hostility spreads between hitherto amicable people

Trivandrum: A cross which was mysteriously 'discovered' and as mysteriously 'lost' in Nillakal, a dense forest area 115 km from Kottayam in central Kerala, has triggered off unprecendented Hindu-Christian clashes. It has also assumed serious political overtones threatening the stability of the year old United Democratic Front ministry.

It all began on 22 March when two Christian labourers, Joy and Pappachan, employed by the Kerala State Farming Corporation in Nillakal, 'discovered' a cross at a spot 150 metres from the ruined Palliyarkavu temple and a furlong from the Mahadevar temple. The next day the farming corporation officials found two jeep-loads of men at the spot offering prayers. The officials objected since it was an encroachment on the territory of the corporation land but the objection was overruled by the devotees who claimed it was their birthright to worship the cross.

The devotees claimed that the cross was established by Christ's disciple, St Thomas, when he came to Kerala. Said Rev. Dr Antony Nirapel, a well-known theologian, "There is historical evidence to prove that the cross was established by St Thomas. In his book, Anthropology of Syrian Christians (1926, pg. 15) N.K. Anan-thakrishnan Iyer states, "At Nillakal there are remnants of the Christian church. This was a centre for worship of Syrian Christians". Other Hindu historians like V. Nagamayya (Travancore State Manual) and K.N. Gopala Pillai (Kerala's Great History) state very clearly that Nillakal was one of seven churches established by St Thomas.

On 27 March the cross disappeared from the spot and subsequently a Nillakal church action committee (NCAC) was formed. The NCAC alleged that certain Hindu leaders in the area were behind the disappearance. The Christians then erected a thatched shed at the spot and a new cross was placed. Pilgrims began to arrive from nearby dioceses to offer daily prayers. The NCAC approached the government to give land for erecting a church. This infuriated the RSS and other Hindu organisations which saw ulterior motives behind the move.

Swami Satyananda Saraswathy, president of the action committee of Hindu organisations alleged that the demand for a church in Nillakal was not an "innocent development". According to him the church would be en route to Sabarimala, the famed Ayyappa temple and this would create tension between Hindus and Christians.

The move to have a church dates back to 1957 when a Christian priest and his followers reported the discovery of a cross two furlongs away from the site where the cross was found. The state government, then headed by EMS Namboodiripad, appointed a commission to probe the claims and the commission in its report stated that the claim was unsubstantiated. The issue was frozen and in 1969 and 1972 there were attempts to construct a church. In 1979 the central and state governments were given a joint petition by 23 Christian MLAs for land. Subsequently, five hectares of land were

The replica of the controversial cross



given by the state government to nine bishops of the community to erect the church but before any action could be taken, the Central Forest Reserve Act 1980 came into force which made it necessary for the Christians to get clearance from the central government. The fact that these efforts date back to 1957 belies the allegation of the Hindu

leaders.

Moreover, there seems to be a clear attempt to rouse Hindu sentiments against the Christians. The RSS mouthpiece, Janmabhoomi/recently published photographs of a few idols lying broken in the Nibakal temple. The RSS leaders claimed that the idols were destroyed by the Christians and that they had tried to erect a cross in the premises of the temple. (In reality, the idols had been in this condition over many years.)

Mr M. D. Joseph, convenor of NCAC told SUNDAY, "We have not canvassed politically on communal lines. It's just coincidence that the local MLAs are Christians." The RSS has alleged that the cross that was missing is in Mr Joseph's house since the truth would be revealed if it was handed over to the archeological department for verification. The RSS leader, Mr Chandrasekharan said, "The present government is in the hands of Christians. They will build a church there and then it will be followed by a school, a hospital and quarters for priests. The forest areas will be felled indiscriminately and sold off for huge sums."

The Nair-dominated National Democratic Party, a partner of the ruling UDF, has also voiced its resentment against the move to have a church in Nillakal. Its party chief, K. G. Pillai, cautioned the government and there were talks of the NDP quitting the front if Karunakaran went ahead with his decision to give land for a church. Mr KGR Kartha, the minister for Devaswon which controls the major temples in the state and Mr Kurup, president of Travancore Devaswom board under whose charge the Sabarimala temple falls, are both NDP members.

The chief minister, Mr K. Karuna.

The chief minister, Mr K. Karunakaran, had come in for strong criticism from the Hindu leaders for

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allowing the Christians to have land for a church near the temple. J Sisupalan, Trivandrum district secretary of RSS had said, "Mr Karunakaran did not seem to have realised the gravity of the situation. When I met him to convey our decision, he told me that the situation could be defused by a conference between the Christian leaders and the Devaswom board president, Mr Upendranatha Kurup. He also warned me that he would deal with the Hindu leaders sternly and claimed that he himself is a devout Hindu and was capable of protecting the Hindu religion. With all regard to the chief minister, I can only say that if he sticks to his decision to give land to build a church in Nillakal we would stop him from offering prayers at the Guruvayoor temple or Sabarimala where he goes regularly. Let not Karunakaran forget that his ministry is a communal front and if the Hindus unite he would be seen nowhere in the political arena."

The chief minister, Karunakaran, when asked by Sunday whether it was his method of dealing with the communal parties which created this explosive situation, passed the buck to the CPI(M)-led Left Front ministry. "The Marxist ministry started this trend of encouraging the parties and with a situation like that in Kerala, we also had to follow suit." The only solution, he felt, was to make everyone understand that what matters is the belief in god and not the number of churches and temples. There was no question of the government going back on its decisions, he said

When asked about the incident in Guruvayoor temple where he was mobbed by Hindus protesting against the government's decision to grant land for the church, the CM said, "I have been worshipping at the Guruvayoor temple for 32 years now. I think that believers should be allowed to pray anywhere. Like in early days pilgrims to Sabarimala used to stop at the St Thomas church in Malayatoor. I feel that the cause of all this trouble is the BJP which, after having been routed in the last elections, is trying to make its presence felt. They are annoyed at me for having taken the lead in allowing harijans into the Guruvayoor temple."

At the time of going to press, Hindus—led by Swami Dayananda Theertha-who were arrested for trying to ransack the church which was built on the alternate site given as part of the compromise formula, have been released. Christian leaders including Dr Joseph Pavathil the Bishop of Kanjirapally under whose jurisdiction Nillakal falls, have decided not to provoke Hindu sentiments. Meanwhile, Sarvodaya leader M.P. Manmathan has started discussion with leaders of both communities in a desperate bid to prevent the

believers in god from killing each other.

The sparks had begun to fly on both sides as the RSS-backed organisations observed Nillakal Day all over the state, and at a public meeting in the capital RSS leaders called for a "war to save Nillakal temple." A procession of Christians in support of Niliakal church was stoned by a mob of RSS workers in Alleppey. At the time of writing the tension seems to be mounting at a frightening pace while Mr Karunakaran is searching for scapegoats. At a recent public meeting he even blamed the CPI(M) for strengthening the RSS during their rule in 1967-78 and 1980-82.

The Sabarimala season which coin-

cides with Christmas and New Year celebrations, has usually been a scene of communal harmony, with Ayyappa devotees en route to the pilgrim centre giving donations to bands of choir groups who roam the highways and streets in a joyful mood. It will be indeed lamentable if such practices become a thing of the past. But instigated by vested interests, if seems as if communal amity between the Christians and be marred. Hindus will ever St Thomas, Ayyappa and religion stand for, seems to be going up in the flames of communal wrath. But the men who fanned these flames still thrive.

Binoo John and A. Asad

INDO-PAK RELATIONS

An easy beginning

New Delhi: The first meeting of the Indo-Pakistan Joint Commission at Islamabad in the first week of June, was more or less an exercise in futility. Not much, in any case, should have been expected from this trip of the external affairs minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao. The days immediately preceding the Islamabad meeting had seen Pakistan taking postures which were perhaps not entirely within the meaning of the term "friendship." President Zia-ul Haq's trip to Nepal had produced some anti-India sentiments. Similar was the case with his directive regarding the inclusion of Kashmir as a subject for study by Pakistani students. Apparently, on the eve of the Joint Commission meeting, Pakistan wanted to refer to Kashmir through the back door.

The Joint Commission, which was set up with much fanfare in March during President Zia ul Haq's visit to this country in connection with the non-aligned summit, was certainly a step forward in Indo-Pakistan relations. But the question is whether

Narasimha Rao: a step forward?



India should be content with the "easiest things first and difficult things later" attitude, which Mr Narasimha Rao advocated at Islamabad. The problems between the two countries are too complicated to merit this easygoing attitude. This is not to suggest that India should sit down at the conference table with the territorial question as the only item on the agenda. But at the same time, as long as the state of Jammu and Kashmir continues to have a portion of its map demarcated as "Pakistan occupied Kashmir," mere platitudes expressed after a round of talks on postal rates and travel facilities cannot be taken as indices of "success."

The positive aspect of the Islama. bad meeting is that at least a beginning has been made. But the insistence on a "no war pact," or as the Indian side would like to call it, "treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation," shows that in reality tensions exist. On the one hand India pooh poohs Nepal's demand for declaring that country as the "zone of peace," and on the other it insists on discussing with its western neighbour the possibilities of signing a peace treaty. The thought of peace treaties between countries like India and Pakistan is as impracticable as the Nepalese insistence of being declared a "zone of peace." In the case of Nepal, the government of India rightly feels that in the absence of any remote signs of hostility from this country, the talk of a "zone of peace" is nothing but a lot of hot air. Similar should be the case with the proposed "peace treaty" with Pakistan. If peace has to be maintained, then no treaties are needed. One wonders if the two countries, by different names, are in reality talking of an armistice. If that be the case, then without reference to the Pakistani-occupied areas of Kashmir, no useful purpose can be served by such a discussion.

India had very diplomatically managed the Pakistan cards during the non-aligned summit by going in for the formation of the Joint Commission. In its penchant for hosting international meets, the government has now to get ready for the forthcoming Commonwealth heads of government meeting (CHOGM), which New Delhi is hosting in November. The question of Pakistan's re-entry into the Commonwealth (which it left in 1971) is bound to be a ticklish one. While Mr Narasimha Rao and his Pakistani counterpart, Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, have been able to tackle the "easiest things" with a lot of finesse, one has to see if, in the coming months, when the question of

Pakistan's participation in the CHOGM will crop up, the same euphoria will be sustained.

Meanwhile, both countries should resolve to remove irritants by becoming discreet in their references to each other. While the Pakistanis are known for their sabre rattling, of late, inexperienced but responsibly placed Indian leaders, like the AIC. C(I) general secretary, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, too have been given to rhetorics on Pakistan (like Mr Gandhi's charge that Pakistan was fanning trouble in Punjab). Certainly the Prime Minister's son and his partymen can be asked to be more careful when referring to neighbouring countries.

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya

ARMY

The chief is chosen

Calcutta: It was a difficult choice to make. Both of them had equally impressive combat records. The senior of the two, Lt Gen. A. M. Sinha, currently the vice-chief of the army staff, had performed commendably in Burma and Indonesia before Independence. But what tilted the balance in favour of Lt Gen. A. S. Vaidya, currently the GOC-in-C of the Eastern Command, as the choice for the next chief of the army staff, was his record of more recent combat experiences against Pakistan and more important, his success in dealing with insurgency in the north-

Although the appointment to the country's top army office is a political decision taken at the highest level, only twice since Independence has the government decided to supersede a senior officer to promote a

junior officer to the post. The first time it was was Lt Gen. Bhagat, in the early Seventies. Although Lt Gen. Bhagat, known in the armed forces as the 'soldier of soldiers,' was the seniormost army commander he was not considered for the office of the army chief and the then chief of the army staff,Gen. G. G. Bewoor, was given an extension for a few months until Gen. Bhagat retired. Then again in 1975, Lt Gen. T. N. Raina became the army chief superseding Lt Gen. N. C. Rawley.

Gen Vaidya, 57, who will take over from Gen K. V. Krishna Rao as the 12th army chief on 1 August, is the third from the armoured corps to be appointed to the office: Gen. Rajindersinhji and Gen. J. N. Choudhuri were the other two from the armoured crops. He is the second army commander from the Eastern

Gen. Vaidva: A winning combination



Command after Field Marshal Sam Maneckshaw to become the army chief; two of his predecessors, Lt Gen. Jacob and Lt Gen. Vas missed the bus narrowly.

Commissioned in 1945, Gen Vaidya's combat record includes fighting the Pakistanis in both the 1965 and 1971 wars. In 1965 he commanded an armoured regiment, the Deccan Horse, in the Khemkaran sector in one of the bloodiest battles against Pakistan and was later awarded the Mahavir Chakra for his performance. In 1971, he was in charge of an armoured brigade in the Shakergarh sector and again bagged

a Mahavir Chakra.

Having successively served as a commander of an armoured division, the director of military operations at the army headquarters and a corps commander, Gen. Vaidya took over as the GOC-in-C of the Eastern Command. And in the two and-a-half years that he has been at the Eastern Command, he could effectively break the backbone of most of the insurgent groups operating in the north-east. The recognition of this came in January this year when he was awarded the country's highest military honour—the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM)—for distinguished service of the most exceptional order.

Under the revised retirement rules for the service chiefs, Gen. Vaidya will be in the office of the army chief for another three years. Previously, the army and the air force chiefs retired at the age of 58. Now the retirement age has been extended to 60. The decision to appoint Gen. Vaidya as Gen. Rao's successor was announced on 31 May, shortly before Mrs Gandhi set out for election campaign in Jammu and Kashmir. It did create a flutter among those who had been expecting the government to endorse Gen. Sinha who appointed the was vice chief of army staff only five months ago, to the post. Gen. Sinha too did not appear to be very happy about the decision and immediately sought premature retirement before Gen. Vaidya formally took over as the army chief. In the normal course, Gen. Sinha would have retired on 1 February 1984. Explaining why he wanted to retire early, Gen. Sinha said "I would like to fade away happily and cheerfully."

Some speculations suggested that Gen. Sinha, who was commissioned only a few months before Gen. Vaidya was, and is only 20 days senior in age, had been superseded for his outspoken manners which some of the bureaucrats never liked In a monograph, Higher defence organisation in India, brought out by the United Service Institution of India in 1980, Lt Gen. Sinha suggested certain structural changes in the defence organisation which could not have pleased the civil servants. For if the changes proposed by Gen. Sinha had been accepted, the civil servants would have lost much of their existing control over the defence organisation. The other speculation that Gen. Sinha was not considered for the army chief's post because his father was an ardent admirer of the late Jayaprakash Narayan, however, does not appear to be very con-

vincing. In the absence of any conclusive evidence to support either of the speculations, Gen. K. V. Krishna Rao's explanation for Gen. Vaidya's choice as the next army chief seems to be the most credible. Talking to newsmen in Pune on 4 June, Gen. Rao said that the criteria for selection was a combination of both seniority and combat experience. Even Gen. Sinha does not doubt Gen. Vaidya's combatworthiness. "He is a highly decorated and competent officer. I am sure the Indian army will continue to perform brilliantly under his able command," Gen. Sinha said. And as Gen. Rao said, "Only one could be selected from five army commanders and the vicechief of the army staff." The choice

has been made.

Tooshar Pandit

MEDIA

Times of trouble

Bombay: Trouble seems to be a recurring phenomenon in Bombay's two major newspaper chains-the Times of India and Indian Express. The 'grand old lady of Bori Bunder' (as the Times of India is popularly known), is having more than just old age problems, with the fight between two unions spilling onto the streets and over to the suburbs where the Times has found a press to print its magazines. The result is that the publication of The Illustrated Weekly (cir. 1,70,000) and Dharmayug (cir. 2,10,000) has been suspended. "We thought we'd rather close down than produce the junk that we were producing, and get some breathing time to reorganise ourselves and look for some good printers," said some employees. Following trouble at their press, the Times had started to print its magazines outside, for which the size of the magazines was reduced drastically.

According to Dr Ram Tarneja,

managing director of Bennett Coleman and Company, publishers of the Times of India and its other publications, the trouble started with "a lightning strike in the etching section of the photogravure department. A mini-minority of 36 workers tried to hold the other workers to ransom. They have no demands, but have only been indulging in continuous violence, threats and intimidation. We had issued warning letters to two workers regarding the go-slow they were indulging in, and that escalated the trouble." When asked whether they might be in for a full-fledged strike, Dr Tarneja said "I would not want to comment on this at the moment. The majority of the workers are not with this miniminority led by Mr Gulabrao Joshi. But if violence and threats continue then we must protect the lives of our employees," he said, implying that the company may even resort to a lockout. Said Mr Pritish Nandy, pub-

Dr Mitra: Back to the Front

Calcutta: "Our target was 25,000 (votes) and we have reached it," said a triumphant Dr Ashok Mitra at around 6.30 pm on 6 June, after he had been declared elected from the Jadavpur Assembly constituency in the recent by election held on 5 June. True, the CPI(M) had won with a resounding majority defeating the Congress(I)'s Dr Sukumar Dutta by 25,028 votes, but the ex-finance minister had not been able to win more votes than the late Mr Sankar Gupta (whose death necessitated the byelections) who had won by a margin of 33,354 votes.

By the time this appears in print, Dr Mitra will probably have been inducted into the West Bengal cabinet by Mr Jyoti Basu, after being out of power for nearly a year. In a campaign meeting for Dr Ashok Mitra, Mr Basu had said: "This government needs him. In the interest of a better, more efficient Left Front government, we need to elect Dr Mitra..." A number of ministers in the West Bengal cabinet have not been keeping well and Mr Basu has had to handle a number of portfolios. In addition, the chief minister himself suffered a mild heart attack and was advised by doctors to go slow. In such a situation, Dr Mitra, as a senior minister in the cabinet, will be able to take a considerable amount of the load off Mr Basu's choulders. Perhaps, it was for this reason that the CPI(M) bosses went back on their word of not nominating a defeated candidate to contest the byelections (Dr Mitra lost the Rashbehari constituency to the Congress-I in the last elections).



Ashok Mitra campaigning: the most wanted minister to revive the party

With Dr Mitra in the cabinet, it remains to be seen whether the CPI(M) has indeed changed its stance vis-a-vis the centre, for it was Dr Ashok Mitra who led the crusade for more financial power to the states. It is not merely the CPI(M) or the West Bengal government but most of the non-Congress(I) led states which have now taken up the chorus of more power to the states.

Political observers believe that with the nomination of Dr Ashok Mitra to contest the "safe" Jadavpur seat, the CPI(M) leadership in the

state has shown that it cannot remain complacent about its massive popularity. The recent panchayat election results have proved that the Congress(1) is slowly gaining popularity among the masses. The CPI(M) can ill afford to lose its vote bank and the only way to gain the confidence of the people is have a government that works and delivers the goods. In Dr Mitra, the CPI(M) will have a person who is a renowned economist and an intellectual, and who can strengthen the party's image.

Tirthankar Ghosh

lishing director, "Nothing is as bad as you are making it out to be. Labour problems can always be there. But we will be back in the market with our weeklies very soon."

Insiders feel, however, that the trouble at the Times has much to do with Dr Tarneja and his chief business manager, Mr Pithvala, who is trying to perpetuate his control over the group beset with a host of problems which are not immediately visible because the mother publication is doing well financially. According to one insider, Dr Tarneja's stranglehold over the organisation is such that no talent can be inducted into the company. This suits him because should efficient outsiders be brought in, they would expose the shoddy working of the company. At a time when all other newspapers are going offset, the *Times* is still being printed on rota gravure. Moreover, most management decisions are neither reasonable nor rational, he said.

Insiders also feel that the labour problem has been overplayed. It is a fact that as the union headed by Mr R. J. Mehta is being gradually eroded, the transition period is getting to be violent. According to the workers, who once owed allegiance to R. J. Mehta, the latter did not take up their cause as he had promised. Said one union activist, "The agreement signed between R. J. Mehta and the management was wrongly implemented, with the result that under one guise or another the workers lost about Rs 20 lakhs. The workers are upset that Mr Mehta collected nearly eight lakhs from them by way of a seven per cent contribution from the arrears they got through the agreement and now when inadequacies in the implementation are pointed out to him, he gets offended. According to R. J. Mehta, once an agreement is made there should be no criticism." The management has been siding with Mr Mehta whom they supported last year when it looked as if Dr Datta Samant would enter the Times. Any worker protesting or trying to seek redress is on the streets. Some 12 of them are in this condition today and they are gradually going over to the Kamgar Utarkashi Sabha of Congress(I) unionist Gulab Joshi.

The general discontent against Mr Mehta is evident in the fact that nearly 15 of the 34-member union committee have resigned. It is felt that within a short time about a thousand workers may join Mr Joshi's union. The total work force is 2,800. The fact is that many people are scared to raise their voice against Mr Mehta until Mr Joshi consolidates. Mr Joshi holds gatemeetings and comes personally to the office to tend to workers' problems whereas Mr Mehta does not have the time. The workers are also suspicious about Mr Mehta's close

ties with the management, but as one activist said, Mr Mehta believes that he can get more for the workers through friendship rather than confrontation.

Mr R. J. Mehta dismisses the. whole episode at the Times of India as a storm in a teacup. He insists that certain sensitive sections like gravure, binding and rotary are affected and this naturally affects publication of the magazines. He claims that the trouble was started by an activist who had committed several assaults and was suspended. This activist approached Mr Gulab Joshi and collected signatures under threat and coercion from the workers in his department. The go-slow started and some people were laid off. The etching section was closed so there was no printing of periodicals, and this set off a chain reaction since there was no work for the binders and this department too closed. A total of three workmen were suspended and seven discharged. The matter is now pending before the industrial court. The management also asked for a good behaviour undertaking but Mr Joshi refused to give anything in writing.

At the Indian Express, the problem is of a different nature and the aging press baron, R. N. Goenka is said to be behind it. Mr Goenka who is out to "crush" R. K. Karanjia's two-year-old paper, The Daily, made a lavish bid to hire Mr Karanjia's news editor, Vishwanathan Nair. Mr Goenka called Nair to his new

second floor office at the Express Towers and promised him the skies. He also tried to gain Mr Nair's confidence by telling him that the Express circulation was falling and that he was not happy with his new resident editor, Rahul Singh. The switchover was almost effected with Mr Nair saying a nostalgic goodbye to The Daily, when the editorial staff of the Express threatened a signature campaign protesting that they would not work under Mr Nair. Mr Nair was formerly on the desk at the Express and had worked under many of those who would have now been under him. And so the whole deal fell through.

表有一点人的 网络白藤沙沙维亚沙维 伯格 说

Meanwhile, Rahul Singh has already had a few heartbreaks. According to insiders and Rahul Singh's friends, he got the story on the Seymour Hersh allegations against Mr Morarji Desai two days before all other papers, from his journalist friend in New York. Rahul Singh first sent the story to Mr B. G. Verghese, the editor, who told him to check with Mr Morarji Desai. At that time, Morarji Desai refused to comment as he said he had to see the book first. Rahul Singh then asked Mr Goenka who, reportedly, said that nothing like it would appear in his paper against Morarji Desai. And then, two days later, everyone else had the story through a news agency. As things stand today, it might not be long before there is a change of editor at the Indian Express. The question is, who will it be this time.

DROUGHT

When people become mere statistics

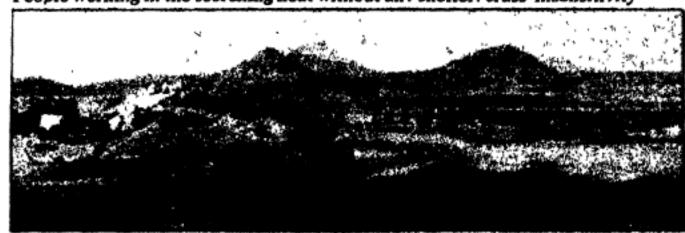
Olga Tellis

Bombay: Mr D. S. Patil is an exsoldier and has all the bearings of one. He was in the 67 Field Regiment and was discharged in the Medical E category. He does not get any pension. Today he wears brown shorts, an army beret and still has his army boots that are as worn out as he is. He was breaking stones in the scorching heat on road work in progress at Sirdhana tehsil in Dhule district and was indignant at the kind of

work they were being made to do. "They don't pay us regularly and honestly and they take away our strength."

Theirs was road work and not an EGS (employment guarantee scheme) work, so they were not entitled to a shelter where they could escape the scorching sun when they needed rest or felt unwell. Little children in their mothers' arms were also not spared from the intense

People working in the scorching heat without anv shelter: crass insensitivity



summer heat in that vast, dry expanse of land. "On the muster they take thumb impression and pay us only Rs 6.50. They cheat on the measurement of the work. For instance, if two depots are near each other then they deliberately count it as one and pay only Rs five. We have to walk six km to this place and six km back home. Six days we get work and eight days we have no work. What are we to eat on these days?

The entire approach of the authorities towards the drought-stricken people, is one of insensitivity, as if they were merely so much more statistics. The government of Maharashtra talks pompously of people "facing the challenge with quiet heroism." This is just adding insult to injury against a people who are "quiet" because they have absolutely no alternative. If they dare protest, the works are closed by spiteful overseers to "teach them a lesson." According to the state government which has been pleading for funds from Delhi, "The 21 scarcity-hit districts include even the traditional paddy-growing districts of Bhandara, Chandrapur and Gadchiroli from the Vidarbha region and the wheatgrowing district of Dhule in the north-west part of the state." Although the state has been in existence for 23 years now, there are thousands of districts which even in normal times, do not have drinking water within walking distance. A recent review of villagers' problems shows that over 10,000 out of 14,444 villages face acute water shortage. The government has passed an ordinance taking over private wells where necessary. Their other measures include drilling of borewells, undertaking regular and temporary piped water supply schemes, supply of water by bullock-carts and tankers, etc. They claim to have tackled 8,493 villages so far. The government also claims that the "supply of foodgrains in required quantity, providing employment within the radius of five kilometres of the affected village, payment of minimum wages of Rs six per person on relief projects on piece wage basis, and providing adequate medical and health care have not been difficult so far." But this is a typical bureaucratic approach which is fine on paper but is distorted in practice.

The collector of Dhule, Mr Baldev Chand who took over a couple of months ago sat in a spacious room with the whirring of the fans and covered by matting to keep the it cool. He said that of the 1,441 villages in Dhule, 1,062 were affected by scarcity; nine out of ten talukas were hit. In September/October 1982, a master plan had been prepared to provide 267 villages with drinking water. After a review this year, 162 more villages were added. The collector says that since July last year there have been 656 EGS works, and labour coming on these works

this year to 44,000 in April. Rs six crores have been spent so far, and 65,000 more labourers are expected to come for work by mid-June. The inadequacy of the government's response to the desperate need for employment is evident when one considers that nearly eight to ten lakh people are affected in this area and only 44,000 have been provided jobs.

There is an exodus of people from several villages like Mehergaon to the neighbouring areas of Surat and Vapi to work in the sugarcane fields. In Mehergaon which has an acute water shortage, there has been no EGS works after March. There is only one nala bunding work which employs some 150 people when 4,000 people need work. In the last ten years despite repeated drought there have been works only on two percolation tanks and 15 nala bundings.

Dhule, which is one of the areas richest in natural resources and programmed development works has been reduced to penury by bureaucratic greed. A long-time political activist in Dhule says, "Just look at the wealth owned by Gulabrao Trimbak Patil, who is an overseer in the irrigation department and a relation of the union minister,

Vijay Naval Patil. He was first the deputy managing director and is now the director of the Sanjay Sahakar Sakhar Karkhana. Just see his bungalow in Dhule and his properties in Mehergaon and his fields. How did all this come about? In Dhule the overseers, contractors, engineers and deputy engineers get rich while the people remain poor. They build colonies for themselves while the people are reduced to penury and so is the district," he alleges.

Currently, there is tremendous propaganda by the government about the acute water shortage and the efforts to combat it. But shortage of water, however acute, is only the tip of the iceberg. The government's intensive propaganda detracts from the urgent need of the people for foodgrain, medicine, the need to have their loans waived, the need for work to survive, and most of all the protection from exploiters, whether overseers or shopkeepers. You can-

the urgent need of the people for foodgrain, medicine, the need to have their loans waived, the need for work to survive, and most of all the protection from exploiters, whether overseers or shopkeepers. You cannot pay people Rs five to six per day and expect them to buy grain in the blackmarket at Rs 12 for seven kg. How will they survive? The scorching heat takes a tremendous physical toll and yet nothing is done to provide them adequate nutrition, shelter, or even protective headwear. Does the government find it so difficult to even be humane? Olga Tellis

Protecting the unborn child

Secunderabad: Health groups, which had campaigned against the hormone pregnancy testing drug (HPT) last year, have called for a renewal of efforts after three drug firms obtained a stay order on the ban from the Calcutta and Bombay High Courts in January 1983.

Apart from the legal dispute, those who support the ban are concerned over continued misuse of the combination hormone drug for pregnancy testing. It is pointed out that many doctors are still not convinced (despite documented scientific studies from the West showing foetal abnormalities), that the drug causes birth defects. Because of this it is feared that even if the ban prevails, nothing can prevent doctors from prescribing a few days course of the oral contraceptive pill (which contains the same hormones) for pregnancy testing.

The Indian cultural milieu adds another dimension. The combination hormone drug is often taken by women for postponing menstruation if their periods are expected on "inconvenient" dates coinciding with religious or social functions. There is always the possibility of damage to an early pregnancy of which the woman is not yet aware.

The drug companies argue that the combination hormone drug has many "other uses" while the activists insist that these are no longer listed in the

latest gynaecology textbooks. According to a doctor active in the campaign, the only possible condition for which the high-dose hormone combination could be indicated is hypermenorrhoea--prolonged heavy bleedingand for this, separate oestrogen and progesterone tablets could be made available and given together when indicated. Besides, hypermenorrhoea, the 1982 *Physicians' Desk Reference* (PDR), approved by the FDA in the USA lists one more indication—endometriosis—over which even the experts disagree, and according to some a high dose of progesterone alone is the treatment for this condition. In any case, even the PDR mentions only two indications for the high-dose combination whereas the drug companies and pro-drug company doctors are giving a long list of conditions for which they claim the combination is required therapy. The impression sought to be created is that the drug has been unnecessarily banned, that consumers will suffer.

Since even in the West the hormone pregnancy test was stopped only after sustained campaigning by consumer and health groups, it is feared that here too the battle could drag on. Meanwhile the media have a vital role in monitoring the continued misuse of the drug for pregnancy testing and helping consumers to protect their unborn babies.

Vimal Balasubrahmanyam

Judge orders CBI probe

Calcutta: In what is considered to be a historic decision, Justice P.C. Borooah of the Calcutta High Court directed the deputy inspector general (DIG), CBI, on 7 June to inquire into the deaths of two teenaged boys-Tirthankar Das Sharma and Sanjib Chatterjee. They were last seen alive watching a religious procession near their homes in Barackpore, some 30 km north of Calcutta on the afternoon of 21 March. On the following afternoon, their mutilated bodies were found lying on a railway track at Pandua, 50 km from Barrackpore. The parents who had been frantically searching for their missing sons, however, came to know

about this on 5 April and long after the police had disposed of the bodies.

From the beginning, the police were convinced that the boys had committed suicide. But this did not satisfy either the parents or the residents of the locality where the boys lived. That led the Bengali daily Anandabazar Patrika, to engage a detective agency, Secret Eye, to conduct a detailed inquiry into the deaths. In his two part report (published in Anandbazar Patrika on 11 and 18 May) Mr Debabrata Dhar, a former DIG of West Bengal police and the head of the detective agency, disputed the police theory and

suggested that the boys had been murdered in cold blood. Mr Dhar also offered to place all the evidence collected by his agency in the hands of the police (Sunday 29 May-4 June). But the police, instead of accepting the offer not only stuck to their original suicide theory but dismissed Mr Dhar's report as 'fiction'. At the same time they started giving out inspired reports that the dead boys had many vices.

What brought the matter before the High Court was a letter written by Sampat Lal, a resident of Chiriamore in Barrackpore district, on 1 June. This was supported by yet another letter signed by 15 other residents of Barrackpore. The signatories of these letters sought the court's intervention complaining that not only had the West Bengal police been sloppy in their investigation into the deaths but were actually terrorising the likely witnesses

The ex-MP's much-married grandson

Jaipur: A scandal involving a number of influential persons including an ex-Congress(I) MP and a sitting MLA of the Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha, has put the ruling government in a precarious position. Despite specific reports to the police, except for recording statements, no action has yet been taken against the accused—although about one and a half months have elapsed since the incident occurred.

The scandal erupted with the marriage of Sangeeta Gaur to Ambey Prasad, the grandson of Master Kishanlal, an ex-Congress(I) MP and presently the vice-president of the Rajasthan Pradesh Congress(I). Ambey Prasad was employed as a revenue inspector in the Jaipur Municipal Corporation. During the marriage negotiations, the Gaur family (Sangeeta's grandfather, Sunderlal Gaur, a retired civil service official, was handling the negotiations) had been repeatedly assured that Ambey Prasad was the best son-in-law they could have got.

The marriage was fixed for 22 April 1983, when about 25 people assembled at the house of Mr Ram Mohan Sharma, a junior engineer in the Jaipur Development Authority and well known to both the families. In the marriage procession were master Kishanlal, Dwarkadas Purohit, exchairman of the Rajasthan Housing Board and Jagdish Tiwari, the president of the Land Development Bank and presently Congress(I) MLA. After the marriage, one of the relatives of the Gaurs who arrived late, on discovering that Ambey Prasad was the groom told Sunderlal Gaur that they had committed a mistake. Ambey Prasad, he told the girl's grandfather, was married, not once but twice and both his wives were living and had been neither divorced nor legally separated.

Gaur and a few others immediately rushed to the groom's house in Khazane Walon ka Rasta in the city and to



The groom, Ambey Prasad: duping the wives

their utter amazement found the house locked. Later enquiries revealed that the bride and groom were in Master Kishanlal's farmhouse. Sangeeta was brought back home only a couple of hours after her departure.

In the FIR, lodged soon after Sangeeta was rescued, the Gaurs have stated that Ambey Prasad was first married to Munni Devi of Jaipur in 1974 and the second time to Vidya Devi of Bharatpur in 1981. Both marriages had been negotiated and attended by Master Kishanlal. However, he did not mention the fact to Sangeeta's grandfather when negotiations were on.

In desperation, the Gaurs submitted a petition to the state chief minister, Mr Shiv Charan Mathur, stating:

"...on account of undue interference of influential Congress(1) leaders and those occupying seats of importance in the administration, the culprits have not yet been arrested. They are continuously threatening us with dire consequences and are asking us to come to minister Heeralal Devpura's residence to make a compromise with Master Kishanlal." Mr Gaur also pleaded to the CM to hand over the case to an independent officer and submitted relevant documents and photographs to prove his case. But Mr Mathur, who is also in charge of the home portfolio has done nothing, Neither have petitions to the state Governor, the Prime Minister as well as the President yielded any results. Milap Chand Dandia

into supporting the police's suicide theory. Accepting these letters and Mr Dhar's reports published in Anandabasar Patrika as a writ petition under article 226 of the Constitution, Justice Borooah observed: "When an unnatural death occurs or a prima facie case of the commission of a cognizable offence is brought to the notice of the police authorities, it is their duty under the Code of Criminal Procedure to conduct an investigation and ascertain the cause of the death."

While directing the DIG, CBL, to inquire into the deaths and submit his report to the court by 23 June, Justice Borooah also called upon the government of West Bengal to show cause why a writ in the nature of mandamus should not be issued directing an investigation in accordance with law to be conducted into the unnatural deaths of Tirthankar Das Sharma and Sanjib Chatterjee. Justice Borooah also wanted to know why the government should not place before the court whatever documents it might have in its possession relating to the deaths or to the investigations carried out so far. The deadline set for government's reply is 23 June. Under the court order, the West Bengal police would be required to furnish all information that the DIG, CBI, might need for his inquiry. Anandabazar Patrika, too, was asked to hand over to the CBI the reports and evidence collected by Secret Eye.

Meanwhile, Justice Borooah further directed the superintendent of police (SP), 24-Parganas, to ensure the safety of the parents of the deceased boys as well as potential witnesses. The SP was also asked to ensure that they were not intimidated by the police. The West Bengal newspapers were prohibited from publishing anything on the matter, excepting the court proceedings, till further orders. That was to prevent the newspapers from making anying sinuations against the dead boys.

While the state government plans to appeal against Justice Borooah's orders before a larger bench of the High Court, it finds itself in an embarrassing situation because of past actions and utterances of its officials and even of the chief miniser Mr Jyoti Basu (he had said in the Assembly that the boys appeared to nave committed suicide). If it is altimately established that the boys nad been murdered, as Mr Dhar's eport suggested, then Mr Jyoti Basu night even be accused of breach of privilege. Incidentally Justice P.C. Borooah had hit the headlines earier in February this year with his verdict on the state's first public nterest litigation on the conditions of the inmates of Dum Dum Central [ail, based on an expose published in Calcutta's youngest English daily The Telegraph. A Special Correspondent

An ovation for a master



It is a once-in- a -lifetime event when the works of a master are exhibited in our cities. The exhibition of the sculptures of Auguste Rodin, held at the Birla Academy of Art and Culture, therefore, was a most memorable experience for Calcuttans. The expertise of the turn-of-the-century's French artist, brought alive in bronzethe beauty and passions of life for the appreciative eyes of over a lakh art lovers in this city. It was ironic, indeed, that Calcutta, where the ovation to the exhibition was the most marked, would have been totally over looked, if the Birlas had not intervened and altered the exhibition's itenerary. And the response certainly proved that the sculptures received, in this city, the most befitting send-off from the country. The picture shows Rodin's famed piece, The Kiss (Photograph: Bipul Guha).

Qutab Hotel

Canded at Palam 8.15 a.m. Zipped across to the Qutab by taxi. Ample time for breakfast.

Thank goodness the Qutab is so near.

The meeting was going to be a tough one. It was good that I could relax for a while. Nehru Place is just a 15 minute drive.

The meeting was super. I think we've clinched it.

1.30 p.m. Gnough time for lunch at the Qutab with the GM and Jactory Manager.

A great success. They liked the steaks at The Grill and we carried on our discussions.

Left for Okhla, 15 minutes away. And Faridabad (which is just a half hour drive)! Impressed. It's going to work out.

Jeeling tired. The green lawns of the Qutab were a welcome sight. Sat by the pool over a long drink.

By 7.00 p.m. was feeling quite energetic.

Couldn't resist the 4-lane bowling alley. The

Took a look at the Service Apartments after that. They're ideal for the Company Executive and the Company Holiday Home.

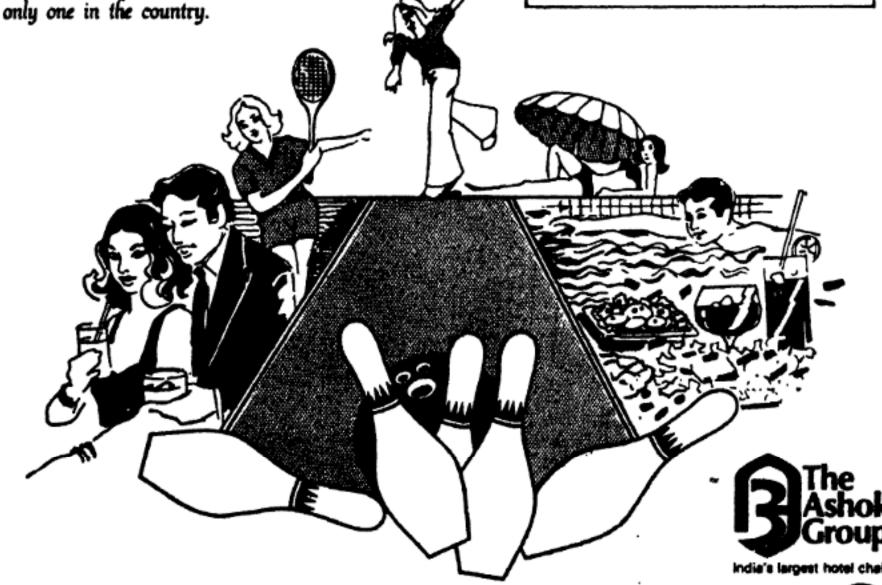
Dinner at the Williamsburg Room with Indian and Continental specialities. It was the perfect way to end the day.

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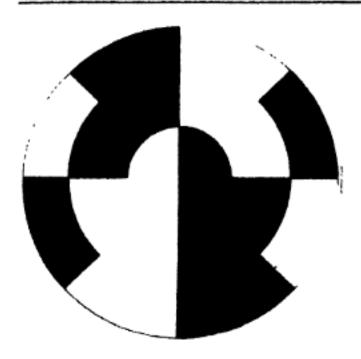
India Tourism Development Corporation



Science for children

Produced by Vikram A. Sarabhai Community Science Centre and VIKSAT Ahmedabad

Colours in a black and white disc



Have you seen colours on black and white surfaces? If not, try constructing a disc of alternate black and white sectors on a white sheet of paper, and spinning the disc at low speed with the help of a hand-drill concentrating on it while ignoring the individual sectors. Alternatively, you can get a disc top from the market; paste this design on it and spin it. After some time you will find that the leading edges of the white sectors will turn red and the trailing edges blue. You will see different shades for different illumination levels. At a faster speed, the whole white sector will be pink-red and a green-blue will cover part of the black section. At a still faster speed, the colours will be indistinguishable, but, little sparks of violet-pink and green-grey light will appear to jump about. The disc shown in the figure will give all three effects simultaneously.

This effect is observed because of the colour perception of our eyes. Certain portions of our eyes are sensitive only to certain ranges of colours and that also depends on the intensity of colours and the backgrounds alternate between black and white, depending on the speed of rotation of the disc. Since the total effect depends on the "simultaneous" activation of "different" portions of the eye sensitive to different colours and intensities, we see different colours, depending on the speed of rotation of the disc.

Do you know?

Studies of human skeletons, victims of a volcanic eruption at Mount Vesuvius 19 centuries ago, which were found at Herculaneum near Naples, have revealed that the aver-

Figure this out

A milkman has a 12-litre jug full of milk. How can he divide the milk equally between two customers using only two empty jugs which have capacities of seven and five litres?

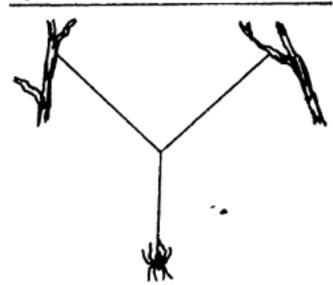
| S EES SES S | 911 488 488 1 | 9 11 11 4 6 6 7 11 |
|-------------------|---------------|---|
| Sul entil-2 | 7-litre jug | Bul artil-SI |

Figure this out: Go through the 12 steps pouring the milk from one jug to another as follows:

noitulo2

age woman was about 154 cm in height while the average manwas 167 cm. This shows that over the centuries the average size of human beings has not changed.

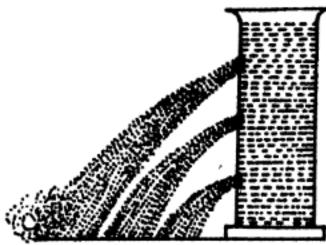
Spider's webs



Watching a spider build an intricate web with a liquid substance which it draws from its underside can be fascinating experience. As a first step, a strand is taken by the spider between two surfaces or is blown by the wind. When a 'bridge' has thus been built, the spider goes to the middle and establishes another support.

Going painstakingly backwards and forwards, the spider then adds spokes and strengthens its webs.

Spot what's wrong



Can you make out what is wrong with this picture?

SCIENCE NOTES

THE next time you see the common Margosa-or Neem-tree, remember that it is a very important tree. Researchers at the Benaras Hindu University have found that the oil that can be extracted from Neem with the help of petrol ether, contains between 46-61.9 per cent of oleic acid, 12-15 per cent of palmitic acid and 14-23 per cent of stearic acid. It is because of all these acids in Neem that it can be used in soaps and also as a protection against dandruff. Not merely that, but Neem oil, it has now been found, can also be used to control diabetes in fat people.

THE popularity of the water buffalo, an animal that we all know so well in India, is fast spreading to the Western countries too. The animal is now recognised as being a potentially rich source of meat, milk, cheese and even fertiliser. Being a tough animal (it has a working life of between 11 to 20 or more years), it is being seen as having a major role to play in solving the food and energy problems in many of the Third World countries. The West too is now trying to raise the water buffalo commercially.

THERE is no way in which you can stop yourself from growing old. But it has been recently discovered that the higher the body temperature, the sooner the individual's ageing process. An experimental study of fish concluded that fish living in water at 15° C, live longer than those living at 20° C. Research is now on to find out methods to control or decrease body temperature so that men and women can stay younger longer. G.S.

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STATUTORY WARNING: CIGARETTE SMOKING IS INJURIOUS TO HEALTH

This Undia



TIRUPATI: Do cows yield more milk when they listen to devotional songs? A study of the milk yield pattern in the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam owned dairy farm here revealed a phenomenal increase in the monthly flow of milk from each cow after the dairy authorities started playing devotional songs while milking their cows in August last year. The songs were played through speakers installed in the milking sheds. During March this year, in the midst of unprecedented drought, 82 cows yielded as much as 15,528 litres as against 12,735 litres yielded by 85 cows during the last drought season. According to Dr P. Konda Reddi, superintendent of the dairy tarm, the average monthly milk yield." went up with absolutely no change either in the feeding schedules or in the food ingredients used. The authorities were seriously considering whether a thorough experiment could be conducted to find out if music was the reason for the increase in yield---Hindu (I. Trinadh, Visakhapatnam)

KOTTAYAM: The names of the mathematical wizard, Shakuntala Devi, and the memory master, Mr Rajan Srinivasan Mahadevan, are to be included in the latest edition of the . Guinness book for setting new records in their respective fields. Shakuntala Devi gets the credit for multiplying two 13 digit numbers in just 28 seconds with no calculations at all. during her recent tour of England. Mr Rajan with his enviable memory power set a world record in memorising and accurately reciting 31,811 random numbers. The average ability to memorise random numbers is supposed to be only seven—Times of India (Sanjsev Narang, New Delhi)

ALLAHABAD: A train passenger in friend's hi the Allahabad bound Triveni Express found when asked to show his ticket to the Deccan is travelling ticket examiner was so garpet)

showing his ricket he bit the finger of the TTE and ran out of the compartment. He was chased and caught by his fellow passengers and handed over to the GRP at Madhosingh station in Allahabad-Varanasi section of the NER—Northern India Patrika (Rajneesh Batra, Allahabad)

BANGALORE: Students at a shorthand examination today discovered they had been given printed answer papers instead of question papers. About 1,200 students throughout the state were affected by the mistake committed by the Karnataka Secondary Education Examination Board. Frantic invigilators telephoned the board officials about the switch in pagers, and were told that the examination had been postponed to 5 June. The printed answer papers were meant for evaluators. Board sources said the mistake was caused by papersetters who wrongly put the answer papers in an envelope and superscribed it "question papers." -Deccan Heraid(Khatib, Bangalore)

NEW DELHI: At least two sweepers, an office boy and two drivers figure among those in the high income bracket employees of WIMCO engaged in the manufacture of safety matches, chemicals, paper and processed food. No less than 198 of the 540 employees who get a salary of Rs 3,000 a month in the company are described as "unskilled" with educational qualifications ranging from "not known" to VI standard.. The two sweepers mentioned in the list got total emoluments of Rs 30,554 and Rs 21,469 during the year. For some part of the year they must have received wages of Rs 3,000 a month. The list of all employees getting over Rs 3,000 is required by law to be published as annexure to the company's annual report—Times of India (Jay Altaf Ahmed, Valathoor)

SHOLAPUR: Seeing is believing, usually, but there are rare occasions. when even the eye appears to lie. A strange incident has been reported from Dalipet, near here, last week. Yellamma quarrelled with her eldest son Ramayya Bhandari and left home. The next day, one of Ramayya's triends told him that his mother Yellamma's body was floating in a nearby well. All the members of the family, as well as neighbours, rushed to the well and identified the body by the sari and blouse she was wearing, as well as by facial resemblance. Police conducted panchanama and handed over the body to the family members. She was buried and death rites were observed. Ten days later, however, one of Ramayya's neighbours went to her friend's house in another locality and

Without Comment

It is my father who was the author of this Article (Article 370) and I am going to see it stays there— Mrs Gandhi

Can I be bought? Has anyone tried to do so earlier?—Morarji Desai, denying the report that he had worked as a paid informant for the CIA

I only write what I know...I am not in the business of running him (Morarji Desai) down. I am in business of reporting—Seymour Hersh, US journalist, who charged Desai with CIA connexions, quoted in Times of India

I am leaving the army with dignity...I have done my innings in the army with complete dedication and devotion and why should I seek an office after 39 years of service?—Lt. Gen. S. K. Sinha, vice-chief of the army staff, when he was superseded by Lt. Gen. A. S. Vaidya

I can understand Mr Rama Rao or Mr M. G. Ramachandran raising regional slogans. Why should Mr Hegde do it with a vengeance?— C. M. Stephen, Congress(1) general secretary

Our target was 25,000 (votes) and we have reached it—Ashok Mitra, former West Bengal finance minister after winning the Jadavpur Assembly constituency seat by a margin of 25,028 votes

Much of my success is due to them (women)--NTR in Indian Express

We shall win through the bullet or the ballot—Sam Nujoma, SWAPO chief, pledging to intensify the battle to free Namibia



I am doubly happy because I didn't win this alone. It was with my family, my friends and the French federation... We have been waiting a long time for a French victory—Yannick Noah, the French tennis star, after winning the French Open Championship in Paris

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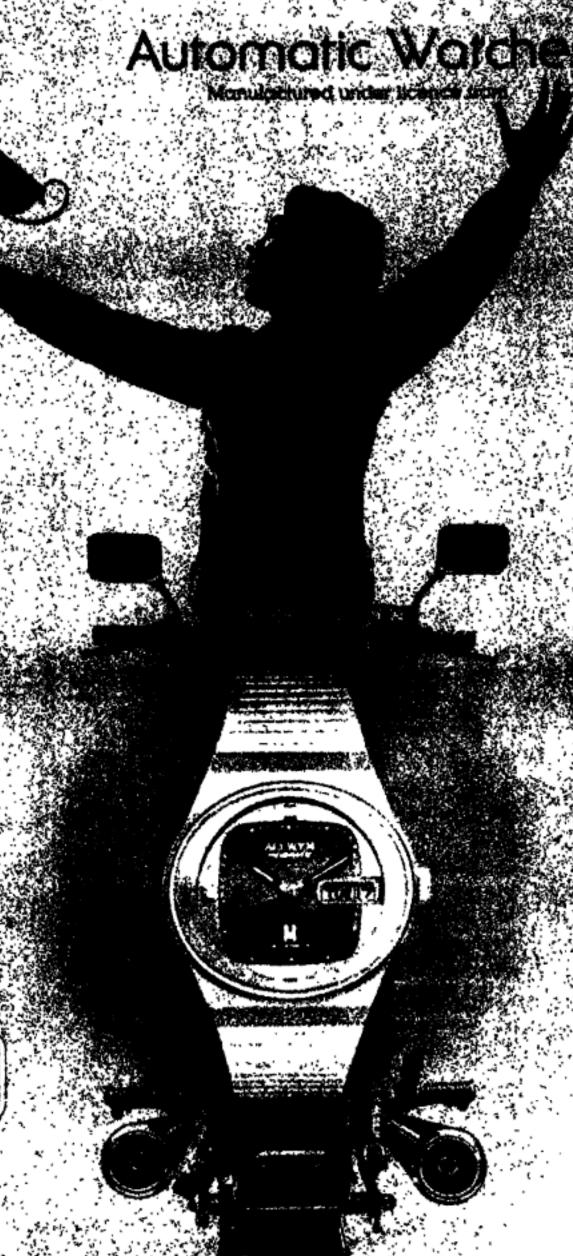
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CIHE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

nita Raj is the happiest girl going around town. There was a time when she walked around with a perennially painful expression on her face. The reason? She was upset with the way people were linking her up with Dharmendra and talking about her hectic affair with him. It took her just one film with the big man to get the "privilege" of being linked with someone almost as old as her father; like it took *Hema Malini* just three films with Raaj Kumar to make them say that she had forgotten Dharmendra and Raaj was the new man in her life. Anita is happy because they have stopped thinking or talking about her affair as they have found other things to talk about. "It was very shocking when I first read about how I was having a grand time with Dharamji and how we met behind closed doors in five-star hotels and make-up rooms in studios. He is so old. He is



Smita: the loser?

also like my father. How can I dream of having an affair with him? I am the last girl to take advantage of an affair to boost my career. I could do without it," says Anita.

Smita Patil lost out very badly to Shabana Azmi in Mahesh Bhatt's Arth. This was expected. It would be interesting to know what the two are going to do in Shyam Benegal's Mandi. The two are playing prostitutes in the film about prostitutes of a different kind.

Anita Raj: 'Dharmendra is as old as my father'



Sandeep Patil has cer-tainly learned all the tricks of the new game he is playing. Even before he could be talked about as an actor, and his work in his first film Kabhi Ajnabi The, the surroundings were rife with rumours about his many-splendoured affairs. First it was Sandeep and Swaroop Sampat. They were supposed to be having a longstanding affair which started before he thought of coming to films. And, to worsen matters, Swaroop blushed every time someone talked about Sandeep



Debashree: bowled by Sandip

Now Swaroop has vanished from the scene and Sandeep is already being seen in all the famous spots with Debashree Roy, the actress who is working with him in his first film. Come now, Sandeep, acting is a serious game, as serious as cricket. Romance is a part of life, but work is important, very important.

They were waiting for something to say which they couldn't, because it was something nasty and didn't know what there was to say about Dev Anand the industry's Mr Clean for years. So they invented a story and planted it in a gossip magazine. They said Dev and his son Suneil had fallen out and were not even on talking terms and that Dev had decided never to make a film with Suneil again. Dev was angry, they said, because his son was getting deeply involved with his heroine,



Natasha: trouble maker

Natasha, a lady who has already given Dev a lot of trouble . The fact, however, is far from the truth. Dev laughed when he read the story and said, "Suneil is a grown-up man now. He can make his own decisions. He can fall in love with any girl he likes. It's his life, why should I interfere? I will, if he does something really wrong, but not if he falls in love."

It is a pity to see the LPremnath family slowly crumbling down. Time was when Premnath was the highest paid villain, even more than any of the other leading men. Having him in the cast was an issue of prestige. There was a time in the Seventies when he used to demand Rs 20 lakhs for a film and got it. Then some kind of madness crept in and soon he was behaving like an insane man. That was when the producers stopped considering him as an actor, even a character actor. The neglect shown by the industry increased his depression. Today, he is old and frustrated and lives alone with his wife in a remote suburb of Bombay. Wife Beena Rai lives with him and tries her best to take care of him. Son Prem Kishan, the hero who started with all the promise has now got lost somewhere in the crowd of young actors. And the other son. Monty (who has a strong resemblance to the young Premnath), is struggling to be what his father once was without much success.

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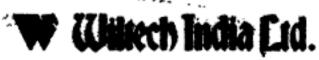


second blade shaves off the remaining bristle before it springs back.

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ARIES (15 April—14 May) This will be a generally good week for you. Businessmen will finalise new contracts. Rely on

your own confidence and the support of your friends and you will be successful. Progress may be hampered if you do not concentrate on your work. This will be a good week for love and marriage Be tactful in dealing with your superiors. Take care of your health this week.

Good dates: 19, 21 and 23. Lucky numbers: 1, 4 and 7. Favourable direction: South.



TAURUS (15 May-14 June) This week will be favourable for mattersof the heart: friendship, courtship and marital affairs. On the other

hand, the health of an elderly relative may cause some anxiety. This will be an active week for all professionals, especially creative people. Some problems regarding petty issues may crop up.

Good dates: 20, 22 and 24 Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: North.



GEMINI (15 June—14 July) All indications point to be- neficial changes in your profession this week. Speculative ventures will yield

good results. You will be helped by your associates. A word of advice: be wary of dubious friends and guard against influences that could be detrimental to your career. A visit to a distant place may be in the offing. This will be a good week for love and romance.

Good dates: 21, 23 and 24. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 8. Favourable direction: North-east.



CANCER (15 July-14 August) This week is favourable for artistes: so go ahead with innovative ideas and you will be suc-

cessful. Businessmen, both your professional interests and those of your families deserve close attention this week. In general, friends will be helpful. There are chances that you may undertake a pleasant journey this week.

Good dates: 19, 21 and 25. Lucky numbers: 1, 3 and 7. Favourable direction: West.

LEO (15 August-14 September) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. There may be notable financial suc-(Comunication) cess, enabling you to make

important purchases. On the other hand a domestic upheaval may cause you anxiety. Do not worry if your expectations remain unfulfilled. The near future looks bright. Job-seekers will do well this week. Do not involve yourself in lucrative deals, in spite of temptations.

Good dates: 20, 21 and 23. Lucky numbers: 3, 6 and 9. Favourable direction: West.



VIRGO (15 September-14 October) This is not a lucky week for you. Avoid needless arguments with your seniors. On the financial

front, you may experience a slump. On the other hand, concentrated attention to business affairs may help you unexpectedly. A word of caution: an elderly woman is likely to hinder your plans.

Good dates: 19, 23 and 24, Lucky numbers: 1, 4 and 5. Favourable direction: South-east.



LIBRA (15 October-14 November) This week, businessmen may come up against opposition andchallenges. Avoid argu-

ments. Provided you rely on your intuition this may be a good week for you. Tact and patience may help you in yourprofessional dealings. Your family will give you all the support you need, especially if you are called upon to shoulder new responsibilities.

Good dates: 23, 24 and 25. Lucky numbers: 2, 3 and 5. Favourable direction: North-west.



SCORPIO (15 November---14 December) This will not be a very favourable week for you. Suspend any changes you might have made in

your plans since brighter prospects are in the offing. Speculators and gamblers will prosper this week. Keep a vigilant eye on your health and that of your children. This week will be a good time for resolving affairs of the heart.

Good dates: 20, 21 and 24. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: East.



SAGITTARIUS (15 December-14 January) This week you are likely to prosper on the social front and meet PCI influential people. You are

advised to conserve your resources. Take care of your health. You may go on a trip in the middle of the week. A new friendship or romance is signified, and a secret matter of the heart will make steady progress. Do not make any unethical moves this week.

Good dates: 19, 20 and 21. Lucky numbers: 4, 8 and 9. Favourable direction: South,



CAPRICORN (15 January---14 February) This will be a good week to start a professional venture. A long forgotten matter will come

up suddenly this week and start troubling you. However, there is nothing to worry about. Have patience. Your domestic life will run smoothly. But the health of a family member may cause anxiety.

Good dates: 20, 22 and 25. Lucky numbers: 1, 2 and 3. Favourable direction: South-west.



AQUARIUS (15 February-14 March) This will be a good week los courses in most marriage. Success in most business ventures is likely.

Employees may get promotions. Artistes are likely to gain recognition this week. A word of caution for all of you: do not be over-optimistic and guard against deception. A close relative may disturb your mental equilibrium and your health may create problems this week.

Good dates: 23, 24 and 25. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 8. Favourable direction: North.



PISCES (15 March-14 April) This week lawsuits and debts may cause you anxiety with no obvious solution in sight. On the profession-

al front, your efforts will not bring desired results but do not lose heart. Plan ahead, for this period will soon come to an end. Keep important papers in safe custody. Friends and relatives will help you out this week.

Good dates: 21, 22 and 23. Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: East.

For those whose names begin with A, M or Y: You are likely to be a born leader, assuming a position of authority. You are not content to be one of the nameless masses, but always strive to gain a prominent place in society as a leader.

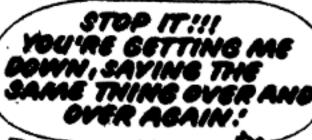
As a leader, on the other hand, you have your faults. Though

you are dynamic, determined and enthusiastic, you are also impetuous and self-willed. For these reasons you often make hasty decisions and give vent to your temper. You get carried away by trivial schemes. A word of advice: try to maintain your calm and you will prosper in life.



BLACK GOLO by Goscinny and Uderzo



















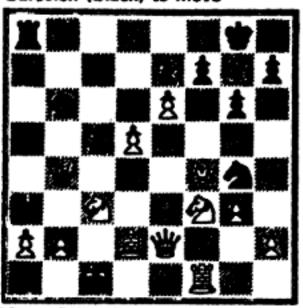








Gurevich (Black) to move



Murei (White)

The Russian school of chess has a unique gladiatorial quality which is often overlooked as most of the leading players. following in the footsteps of Karpov and Petrosian, deliberately suppress this sense of bravado from their play. Since relatively few internal Russian games are widely published in the West, our main source of true native Russian chess comes from the steady stream of emigrés, supplemented by the occasional defector. Many of these emigres are not ranked especially highly in the Soviet Union, yet on settling in the West they soon develop into strong intemational players. Two, Yasha Murei (Israel) and Dmitri Gurevich (USA), played at Hastings last year and impressed not only with their results, but also with the thrilling and mind-boggling menner in which they

were achieved.

There is a corrupted form of chees called kriegspiel, played with two boards, in which neither player knows the whereabouts of hie opponent's pieces. One of the features of kriegspiel is that you tend to ignore your opponent's moves (as you don't in fact know what they are). One might be forgiven for mistaking the following encounter for a game of kriegapiel, so adament is each player in pursuing his own course of action seemingly regardless of the consequences. Of course both Murel and Gurevich were well aware of each other's moves and intentions, but the game does illustrate true Russian chess at its most exciting and best.

White: Y. Murei Black: D. Gurevich

Benko Gembit

P-Q4 N-KB3 2 P-QB4 P-B4 3 P-Q6 P-QN4 4 PxP P-QR3 6 N-QB3 P-Q3 8xP 5 PxP P-KN3 P-B4 8 N-83 B-KN2 10 P-K6 9 P-K4 ᡐ After accepting a pawn sacrifice it is not within the Russian mentality to try to consolidate.

11 PxP 12 B-KB4 BxB N-02 13 RxB 14 Q-K2 Q-N1 15 O-O-OQ-N51 Stronger than regaining the pawn by 15

N(N5)xKP as after 16 KR-K1 P-B3 17 K-N1 followed by BxN and N-K4 White obtains a firm grip on the game. 16 P-KN3 KR-N1 17 R-C 17 R-Q2 N-N3

P-K6" DIAGRAM

P-841

19 BxR N-B5!

A true coasack style counter-attack against the White king. The principal threat is . . . BxN which White meets by ignoring it. 20 P-Q617 BxN 21 Par 22 Ox81 Cx8 Typically choosing the long reverse recepture (always the most difficult to visualise) rather than the 'straightforward' 22 . . . Rx8 23 O-Q8+ K-N2 24 P-K8=N+ K-R11 which also wins. 23 Q-83 RxP 24 P-KB-Q+l0xQ 25 OHN R-R5! 26 Q-Q3 Finally Black has emerged with an extra pawn, but his king is also much safer. 27 K-Q2 NxP! 28 0-08+ If 28 NxN R-Q5 29 Q-87+K-R3 31 K-82 R-85+ 28 . . . K-N2 30 R-KR1 Q-Q4+ 32 Resigns. It will be mete in two with . . . Q-Q6+ and . . . R-R5.

Assault on KN file White: Larsen Black: Franco Grunfeld Defence

| 3 N-83 5 P-KR4 7 P-04 9 0-02 11 0-0-0 13 Q-K2 15 P-R5 17 R-N3 | P-KR3 B-N2 BxN N-B3 P-QR3 P-N4 QR-Q1 | 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 | P-Q84 PxP P-K4 B-K3 PxB B-QN5 8xN KR-N1 QR-N1 | P-KN3 NxP N-N3 B-N5 P-K3 Q-83 PxB Q-0 K-R1 |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| 15 P-R5 | P-N4 | 16 18 | KR-N1 | 0-0 |
| 21 RxB 23 Q-N3 | PxB Resigns | 22 | QxP | OXRP |

MICHAEL STEAN

Bridge

A good start is helpful in all games, as the cricket commentators often point out. In a bridge championship it is difficult to recover from a 19-1 reverse in the opening match, especially when the opponents are Italy. The British team, well fancied at the start, never surfaced after this beginning in the 1975 European Championship, played in Israel. After a lapse of time it is worth looking at one costly deal.

Desier South Game all ▲ K 10 6 **♦ A 5 3 ▲** A K J 8 6 5 2 **▲** Q B 5 3 2 A 10 5 3 2 0 1 9 6 4 102 K 8 7 8 10743 A 9 7 4 Q J 9 6 4

The Italian North-South were playing the Leghorn Diamond, in which One Diamond the strong HHIT catch-all. South opened One Club, therefore, and this had at any rate a psychological effect, for North soon carried the

bidding to Six Clubs, which presented no problem.

This was the British bidding:

| SOUTH | NORT |
|--------|---------|
| Priday | Rodrigu |
| 1. | 34 |
| 3♦ | 49 |
| 44 | 5NT |
| 64 | 6♦ |
| No | - |

The North hand contains so many features - the good clubs, the diamond support, the spade and heart controls - that it is difficult to manage. Might South have rebid 3NT? Should North have repeated his clubs instead of showing the heart void?

The best play in Six Diamonds is debatable. South's line was to ruff the heart lead in dummy, cross to 🖨 Q, ruff another heart, and lead a high club, discarding the third heart. There would still have been problems if this had stood up. The afternative line, after ruffing the heart lead, is to lead a low diamond from dummy. This is likely to win if East holds, as he did, K x or K x x of diamonds. If West has the trump King and leads another heart, declarer will need to drop • 10. A problem for computers if computers are any good in this field.

TERENCE REESE

Stamp



Just over 100 stamps were leaued in British Commonwealth countries to commemorate the Queen's coronation on 2 June 1953. Those of the Crown colonies featured a portrait of the Queen from a photograph by Dorothy Wilding. In it the Queen weers a diamond tiers originally given to Princess Mary of Teck in 1893, King George V.

C. W. HILL

QUESTIONS

- The largest country in the world is the Soviet Union, Which is the smallest?
- May, the fifth month of the year, is named after a Roman goddess. Who is she?
- In English literature a distinguished trio of poets comprised the 'Lake School.' Who were they?
- 4. When is the unit 'Hogshead' used? In space slang, what does perturbation. mean?
- With which sport would you associate the term 'chukker?'
- In chemistry, what is nitrous oxide popularly known as?

railanating effect. 7. Laughing gas, on account of its ex-

6. Polo. in orbit. 5. It means satellite wandering off course hogsheed is equal to 238.6 ligres. 4, it is used to measure wine. One Lake district. They made their homes in the English Wordsworth, Colendge and Southey. 2. Wala, the mother of Mercury. WIELS UBORNA !!

YHRMEUR



Sunday crossword

No. 9 12 23 25 27

ACROSS

- 1. Trains please, perhaps, and are jocular. (12) 9 Ergo, sounds like the direction of the quartet. (9)
- 10. Did he really find amusement godly? (5) 11, Use N.E.R. factors to make certain. (6)
- 12. Does a horror story have this effect on blood-or milk? (8)
- 13. The birds replayed their end set to make their home. (6)

- 15. These lazy ones don't necessarily wear trousers (8)
- 18. To dine inside the berg, strangely, shows you for what you are (8)
- 19. Just an intrigue, to form councils. (6)
- 21. Dice a tab oddly in order to formally renounce. (8)
- 23. An illuminating sulk? (6)
- 26. Swears—and mends simultaneously, it appears. (5)
- 27 Next sieve, maybe, is large. (9)
- 28 Apparently the ideal garb to ride a bicycle (5,7)

DOWN

- Caress the bird, and produce a design. (7)
- 2. Not the odds makes level. (5)
- 3. Weapon and boss combine to lead the attack. (9)
- 4. One negative meeting another coming up—siesta time. (4)

- Regret wholly—in a sad manner (8)
 Finish journalist? Brought to a close. (5)
 Ice in D.N.T. stirred to make a happening (8)
- 8. Blends, within a summer gesture (6)
- 14. Was poet Stephen the last of the big ones? (8)
- 16. They transmit motion in machinery, though not necessarily in pairs. (9)
- 17. Name a hat, maybe, to produce an object of abhorrence. (8)
- 18. Does this drink mark you? (6)
- 20. Apparently these hide what they project. (7)
- 22. The 'dramatis personae' go east and find a social class. (5)
- 24. Sounds correct, to form letters! (5)

Solutions to Sweat Crossword No. 8

- Trample 5. Murders 9. Auden 10. Pistachio 11 Predatory 12. Terse 13. Resit 15. Anatomies 18. Redeemers 19. Sifts 21 Scant 23. First hand 25. Morse code 26. Naive 27 Deleted 28 Seconds
- 1. Trapper 2 Addressed 3 Panda 4. Esplonage 5. Misty 6. Reactions 7 Ether 8. Showers 14. Treatment 16. Asserters 17. Inflation 18. Resumed 20 Sadness 22. April 23. Flood 24. Tonic

Compiled by Rita Tewari

A SALES TRIP?



Rao: arms deal with the USA?

THE three day visit by American secretary of state Mr George Shultz, beginning on 29 June, may be utilised by India and the USA for discussing possible arms sales by the latter. India is keen to buy C-130 Hercules transport aircraft for the air force, M-198 howitzers (155mm), TOW anti-tank missiles and machine guns for the army

from the USA. The Indian interest in these equipment was initially shown in 1981, when a delegation led by the then defence secretary, Mr K.P.A. Menon, visited America. The deal could not come through basically because India wanted transfer of technology in the case of equipment for the army and the Americans were not agreeable. India's dilemma is that while it wants to buy these arms, which are the best in their respective fields, it cannot ignore the 32 ordnance factories in the country which have so far been the mainstay of the army's requirements. If a direct purchase deal is struck, then the production capacity in these units will become idle. But the US Congress, which has been taking anti-India postures on many issues, is unlikely to agree to the transfer of technology. The one equipment in the Indian shopping list which may ultimately come off, therefore, is the transport aircraft. Though the overt purpose of Mr Shultz's visit is to chair the Indo-US joint commission meeting, more serious matters, like the possible arms deal and a discussion on possible Soviet pullout from Afghanistan may be the focus of the discussions between Mr Narasimha Rao and Mr Shultz.

RAJYA SABHA SEAT FOR V.P. SINGH?

WILL Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh seek election to the Parliament from Bulandshahar where a Lok Sabha byelection is due? Since his induction into the union cabinet in January, there has been speculation about the constituency from which Mr Singh will seek to enter Parliament. Exercises have begun at 1, Akbar Road, the residential office of the Prime Minister, where her political aide Mr Makhan Lal Fotedar sits, to select the Congress(I) candidate from Bulandshahar (the date of the byelection is yet to be announced). Mr V.P. Singh is understood to have declined to stand from Bulandshahar. He prefers to be elected to the Rajya Sabha instead. The seat from the Delhi Metropolitan Council constituency is vacant. He may be considered for this seat. The names being bandied about for Bulandshahar, meanwhile, are those of former minister of state for external affairs, Mr Surendrapal Singh, and Chaudhury Jagbir Singh. Mr Jagbir Singh, a minister of state in the Morarji Desai and Charan Singh ministries (he was among those who

had quit the Desai team along with Charan Singh), defected to the Congress (I) in 1980. By circulating his name as a possible candidate, the Congress (I) high command wants to bait other jat leaders from the Lok Dal fold.



V.P. Singh: looking for a safe seat

POWER GAMES IN THE CONGRESS (I)

THE Congress(I) high command has its own way of maintaining a balance of power between warring factions. The best example of this game is the handling of Mr Tariq Anwar and Mr Chandan Bagchi, two youth leaders from Bihar. Mr Tariq Anwar, the Indian Youth Congress(I) president, was abruptly removed from the presidentship of the Bihar unit and Mr Bagchi appointed in his place. The very next day, when Mr Anwar complained, he was appointed a joint secretary of the AICC(I). When Mr Anwar was made the IYC(I) president, it was but natural that Mr Bagchi's days in the Bihar unit were numbered. But when Mr Anwar managed to ease out Mr Bagchi from the Youth Congress, with the help of the chief minister, Dr Jagannath Mishra, Mr Bagchi managed to get elected to the Rajya Sabha on the vacancy caused by Mr A.P. Sharma's appointment as Governor of Punjab With Mr Bagchi joining Mr Anwar in Delhi as a ' MP (Mr Anwar is in the Lok Sabha), the faction fight took a queer turn. In order to keep Mr Bagchi away from the Youth Congress, he was made one of the coordinators of the All-India Seva Dal of the party. Now Mr Bagchi seems to be going all out to outdo Mr Anwar by organising a camp of the Seva Dal in Delhi in the next one or two months. The provocation apparently came from the two successful Youth Congress workers' training camps organised by Mr Anwar.

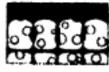
RAM LAL'S SLOW AND QUIET MOVES

WHAT is former Himachal Pradesh chief minister Mr Ram Lal doing these days? Since the appointment of the new chief minister, Mr Veerbhadra Singh, there has been speculation about whether Mr Singh will appoint enquiry committees to look into the charges of irregularities against top officials and relatives of the former chief minister which had rocked the state during Mr Rum Lal's tenure. Mr Veerbhadra Singh, however, has not shown any inclination to do so. Mr Ram Lal, of course, has not returned the chief minister's gesture. Sitting in his new bungalow at Simla's Stokes Mount, he is believed to be quietly planning moves against Mr Singh.

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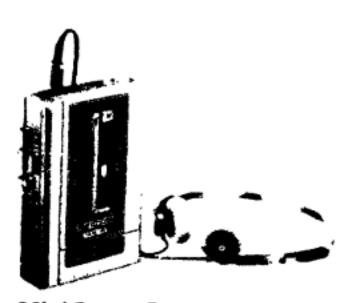
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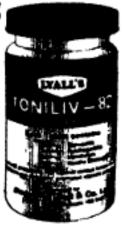




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SUNDAY

VOLUME 10 ISSUE 49 RS 2.50 AN ANANDA BAZAR PUBLICATION

26 June-2 July 1983



Ghanshyamdas Birla, the doyen of Indian entrepreneurs who dominated the country's business scene for more than three decades, died in London on 11 June. G. D. Birla was not merely a businessman: he was committed to nationalism and was a close associate of Mahntma. Gandhi. Over the years, Mr Birla built up a massive Birla empire from scratch. Today, the question is: With the unifying symbol, G. D. Birla, gone, will the empire fall apart? Sunday takes a look.

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SPECIAL SECTION

In the last quarter of a century, minute shards made out of sand—commonly known as microchips—have brought about a revolution in the lives of human beings. Chips are the core of computers—the modern miracle performers. From simple additions to complicated calculations for placing men on the moon, there is little that a computer cannot accomplish. Sunday brings out a special survey on the world of microchips and the changes this technological wonder is bringing to our daily lives.

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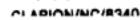


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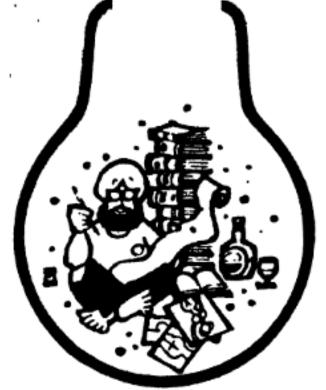


"Intellectuals" and the Punjab situation

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There is a group in Delhi which holds periodical meetings to discuss burning topics of the day. I am all for such groups because I am convinced that it is for intellectuals and academics to analyse knotty political, economic and social problems in a cool, detached and objective manner and offer their suggestions to the people in power who are usually too involved in them to be able to see the wood for the trees. I was invited by this group to participate in a panel discussion on the inflammable situation developing in Punjab. Other panelists slated for the debate were cabinet minister Buta Singh and Harkishen Singh Surject, the Marxist MP who has done more to bring about an understanding between the Akalis and the government than anyone else. I overcame my allergy to the word "intellectual" and my antipathy towards the convener of the group-a singularly abrasive and unlovable type of man-and accepted the invitation. I knew what Buta Singh and Surject would say; what I really wanted to hear were the views of the intellectuals

of Delhi. I came back as the cliche goes, a wiser and a sadder man. The small hall was packed with both Hindus and Sikhs--that was a healthy sign. Both Buta Singh and Surjeet failed to show up: on most of this group's meetings, the main speakers are known to absent themselves, perhaps for good reason. Instead, they got retired Vice-Chancellor Amrik Singh to participate. The convener who presided and promised to take no more than five minutes to introduce the speakers, orated for a full 15 minutes of which less than one was devoted to introductions. It was evident that he used this forum to let off his own undigested gas. Amrik Singh spoke as one would expect an academic to speak: lucidly, without raising his voice even once. He did not have one kind word for the Akalis. On my part I tried to be as dispassionate as I could, described the Anandpur resolution as the charter of annihilation of the Sikhs and criticised the Akalis for their prolonged morcha. I was equally critical of the government for unduly prolonging . the negotiations and unwittingly allowing the Akali recalcitrance to take the shape of a confrontation between the Sikh community and the rest of India. The questions that followed came as a jolt. These were addressed by Hindu members of the audience and their tone made it clear that they assumed that being a Sikh my sympathies lay with Sikh extremists:



Gossip sweet and sour

KHUSHWANT SINGH

"Are Sikhs Hindus?" was the opening shot. "No," I replied, "although very close and often connected by matrimonial ties, Sikhs regard themselves a community, apart from the Hindus." Second shot: "Why didn't you condemn the murder of the Nirankari Baba?" I replied that I did then and do so now. Third shot: "Why didn't you condemn the murder of Lala Jagat Narain?" demanded another again. I replied that I did so then and do so now. "Why didn't you condemn the hijackings?" "Why don't you condemn the misuse of the Golden Temple to harbour criminals?" And so on. Not to be outdone, the convener whose job should be to sum up the debate and thank the speakers, launched into an impassioned harangue claiming all the patriotism for himself and denouncing the Akalis for the lack of it. It was a kind of oration one would expect to hear at a meeting of the Akhil Bharatiya Trade Union of semiliterate Mahabuddhoos on the lawns of the Boat Club rather than in a group with pretensions to intellectualism. Or maybe I was out of touch with reality. My notion of an intellectual was a well-read person capable of cool, dispassionate reasoning, "What I was facing was a mob with the mental level of teenage boy-scouts of the YMCA. I protested as vociferously as I could, then walked out in a huff. Even more alarming for me was to discover that most of the Sikh members of the audience did the same.

This is the sort of thing that used to take place in Lahore in 1946 and early 1947. That time similar groups would break into Muslims on the one side, Hindus and Sikhs on the other. Now it is Hindus on the one, Sikhs on the other. What

are we heading for?

Philosophy of life

Whenever asked: "Do you have a philosophy of life?" I reply "Yes I have." But when asked to spell it out I begin to fumble for words and end up quoting James Joyce's memorable lines from his novel A portrait of the artist as a young man. They are the closest that I can get to this elusive something designated as life's philosophy. It goes as follows: "You have asked me what I would do and what I would not do. I will tell you what I will do and what I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use-silence, exile, and cunning."

I was heartened to see that Ruth Prawer Jhabvala has identical views. As a matter of fact, a wellresearched book on her as a writer is entitled Silence, exile and cunning (by Yasmine Gooneratne, Orient Longman). In an article Ruth sent me for publication long before she won her innumerable literary awards, she quoted Joyce's lines and added: "This I interpret for myself to mean that I must keep my mouth shut, stay aloof from the world around me and carry on my business like a thief in the night, pillaging what I need and hoarding it on the secret recesses of my imagination to make of it what I

can.'

She has certainly followed Joyce's injunctions by remaining utterly unsocial, never talking about her work and, having taken all she could from India, quietly slipped out into a self-imposed exile to the United States. However she does not admit that what she stole from India was not like a "thief in the night" (she is too short-sighted to be able to steal even in broad daylight) but from her own family, notably her husband, Cyrus Jhabvala. "Ihab" is a great raconteur who can create vivid scenes with words, mimic people's voices and make them come alive. Most of "Jhab's" anecdotes find their way into Ruth's novels and short stories.

Ruth did not complete Joyce's quotation. His summing up really rounds up what I believe should be every writer's philosophy of life: "You made me confess the fears that I have. But I will tell you also what I do not fear. I do not fear to be alone or to be spurned for another or to leave whatever I have to leave. And I am not afraid to make a mistake, even a great mistake, a lifelong mistake, and perhaps as long as eternity too."

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Did the *padayatra* make any difference?

did not write on Chandra Shekhar's padayatra earlier because, frankly, I was cynical about the venture. There was nothing he could have learnt that he did not know before walking from Kanyakumari to Delhi. While on foot or in a car, poverty looks the same. What interested me was not what impact the padayatra had on him but what impact he had on the people who saw him march.

So I visited some of the places he had walked through. There is no doubt that the people were inspired by his visit, his dhoti-clad figure, his simplicity and his pertinent remarks. It was something novel for them-a leader coming to them on foot and that too not to seek their votes. But they have gone back to their helpless grind, to their dreary life as if he was a strange man who passed by and made no difference to them.

They must have talked about him for days, it was an event in their uneventful lives, to be remembered for a time and forgotten. No one has come to them after him, wanting to redress their grievances—they had poured their hearts out to him-to help them in their unending struggle to exist. Somehow they had pinned their hopes on him.

Chandra Shekhar cannot be blamed for this. Though he is the party President, the party has no apparatus to work at the grassroots. And right from Morarji Desai to Subramaniam Swamy, most Janata leaders have been running down the padayatra so much that the party could not have been activised to follow up the padayatra. In fact, some Janata leaders have already voiced the demand that the money given to Chandra Shekhar—it was. mostly in small coins and one or two rupee notes-should come to the party's coffers. But he made it clear

more than once that the amount would be used for the benefit of the villagers. But here again, even if the amount were to come to several lakhs of rupees, the money would be too little to do good to the millions. Chandra Shekhar might be sadly aware of this, he comes from a rural area.

Money alone can do little to solve the problems of the countryside. What is needed is a major social change, to release the people from the cruel grip of landlords, moneylenders and the custodians of caste on the one hand and the police, patwaris and politicians on the other. Probably the best course is to organise the lower half for radical changes. But Chandra Shekhar knows that JP, his mentor, after participating in many padyatras, came to the Marxian conclusion that power must be captured to bring about change. And JP nearly brought about the miracle in 1977 through the ballot box.

The padayatra has given Chandra Shekhar an edge over every politic-

Chandra Shekhar's padayatra must have had more impact than what meets the eye. And there must have been more gains, for others have been led to emulate him. Perhaps some of our politicians may be seen using their legs for purposes other than crossing the floor. And it is to be noted that Rajiv Gandhi also did a padayatra of sorts.

al leader in the country. They, particularly Mr Charan Singh, run him down but they know that he is now more respected than any of them. Whether he symbolises the hope for the future or not, he has earned the credibility to lead a national democratic alternative. (his possible rival, Atal Behari Vajpayee, is willing to accept him as the next Prime Minister).

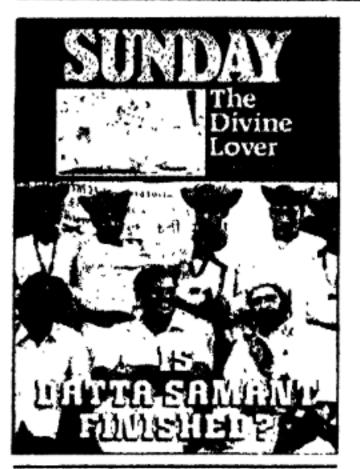
True, old and discredited men who should have retired from politics and help form a coalition against Mrs Gandhi, still cling to the centre of the stoge. But Chandra Shekhar perhaps could be a force to push them aside. He must be conscious that the people want change, not only in the government but in the style of governance and the faces that want to govern them. The men, burning with personal ambitions, do not represent the change. In fact, the Janata government, dominated by the Congress way of doing things, was no departure from the old rule and sustained only the status quo.

Chandra Shekhar has now the stature to break from the past and bring together different political parties around a time-bound economic programme and have a clean, dedicated team, men without any taint of corruption, to implement it. And he must rise above personal loyalties because there are quite a few undesirable men around him. On the basis of the popularity he has won by showing that he is more than a politician, a man of certain values, who is eager to serve the people, the padayatra might prove to have done some good after all.

But I have my reservations. *Padayatras* are not new. Vinobha Bhave must hold the record. I do concede that his Bhoodan Movement did rouse many people's consciences for a time. And he identified himself with the people by leading a simple, austere life. So also Gandhiji, who walked for a cause, who lived in a village, almost as a villager. Chandra Shekhar will live in distant Delhi, isolated in a world of politics and media. In fact, it is this isolation of politicians that nas deprived them and the people of sustained efforts towards betterment at the grassroots. There is seldom any agitation for that. Even the communists have stayed away from the landless.

But perhaps I am overcynical. Chandra Shekhar's padayatra must have had more impact than what meets the eye. And there must have been more gains, for others have be 1 led to emulate him. Perhaps some of our politicians may be seen using their legs for purposes other than crossing the floor. And it is to be noted that the crown prince, Rajiv Gandhi, also did a padayatra

of sorts of sorts



Samant: A terror?

The cover story, Is Datta Samant finished? (29 May), successfully analysed the causes behind the failure of the prolonged textile strike in Bombay. Led by the militant leader Datta Samant, the strike was marked by unprecedented violence. The demands made by the workers were vague and their only aim was to stall production in the mills

Throughout the strike, Dr Samant was busy protecting his image rather than doing something substantial for the poor workers. The strike has rendered thousands homeless—it is not uncommon to see textile workers begging.

Mukul Munish, Bombay

There is no denying the fact that Dr Samant's charisma no longer works. With the textile strike dying a natural death, Datta Samant should eat humble pie instead of indulging in violence. Brajesh Mishra, Rourkela

When millions of educated Indians cannot hope to earn more than Rs 600 per month, the demand of the textile workers who were already drawing over Rs 1,200 per month for an increase in their salary does seem illogical. In the name of trade union, Dr Samant has introduced indiscipline in industrial circles. His very name spells a terror everywhere. Marxism has taken a grotesque form in the hands of this leader. J. Mathew, Calcutta

The cover story revealed the nature of our rulers. The government has clearly sided with the mill owners in the strike Dr Samant may have failed but he will go down in history as the champion of the working class.

Tamonas Sarkar, Jalpaiguri

The prolonged peaceful textile strike in Bombay only proves the right leadership which the workers got from Datta Samant.

M. Anwar Azad Ansarı, Bhabua

Paying Paul

Tooshar Pandit gave a clear picture of the intricate modus operandi of the stock market (Deals within a deal, 22 May). The article was written with the common reader in mind. Subrato Sengupta, Gingia (Assam)

Whatever be the intention of Swraj Paul, his threat to take over some Indian companies did make the industrialists think of the hitherto forgotten shareholders

Ramanand Sharma, Bangalore

It was pitiable to learn that our industrialists had sought help from politicians to overcome Swraj Paul's threat. Instead they could have settled for a truce with Mr Paul himself.

S. Ramanan, Coimbatore

The buying of shares by Swraj Paul before the budget clearly indicates that he came to know of the concessions for non-residents announced in the budget before hand. The concerned politicians and officials must be punished.

Tanvır Salim, Alıgarh

The interview with Vinay Bharat Ram ('Swraj Paul's transactions are illegal') helped us to know a lot about DCM. It is a well managed firm and any attempt to disrupt the present management should be thwarted.

Mayom Karga, Along (AP)

Not our fault

Our attention has been drawn to the Item NDDB's computer problems, (Delhi Diary, 17 April, 1983) which gives an erroneous impression that the National Diary Development Board has considered its computer as a toy and is discarding it.

The NDDB worked out detailed specifications of its computation requirements with the assistance of a professional management consultancy firm. These requirements formed the basic specifications of our tender for the computer and the final choice of the computer was made in consultation with the department of electronics. Unfortunately the computer delivered to us does not meet the performance levels as laid out in the tendered specifications and as per the contract with the computer supplier. The acceptance trials of the computer were also done in association with the department of electronics, and the computer has not passed the acceptance tests. The manufacturer of the computer has indicated their willingness to upgrade the computer system to meet the ori-ginal specifications. There is, therefore, no question of NDDB making a wrong choice in buying the computer,

Incidentally, the NDDB computer which is being put to full use was procured under the UK-India capital investment grant and not British credit as reported.

B. P. Aneja, Secretary, National Dairy Development Board Anand

Muslim Marxist

fter reading the extract from Tariq Ali's book, Zia, Islam and the Gun (22 May and 27 May), one gets the impression that a Muslim Marxist (a hybrid phenomenon) is after the blood of a Muslim fanatic. It looks as though-Tariq Ali wanted to write a book called 'Can Soviet Union survive till 1984'. Bhutto is shown in good light because he had talked of socialism. But was not Bhutto a key actor in the Bengali massacre plan? He is the person who had declared a 1000 year war with India. President Zia is a dictator but one cannot say that he is a tyrant. He is the man who could spurn 400 million dollar American aid calling it peanuts. But look at our Calcutta Marxists who gladly clutch at 140 million dollar World Bank aid. Mr Ali, the pure red Marxist did not have any qualms in getting his book published by the capitalist Penguin Books. Hypocrisy and cynicism are the ingredients of which Third World progressives like Tarıq Ali are made.

K. Susrita, Calcutta

Tariq Ali is hardly a competent authority to write on affairs related to Pakistan or to this subcontinent. Hounded out of his country, this rabid 'leftist' refused to return to his country and people. Mr Ali should concentrate on racial issues in Britain.

Dilip Chatterjee, Burdwan

Widespread casteism

This is a rejoinder to the letter by P. L D. Samson (Opinion 22 May) on the article How to lance communalism (3 April). Casteism is prevalent even among Syrian Christians of Kerala who claim that their Brahmin forefathers were converted by St. Thomas. All the other sects among Christians maintain their identity and some even do not mix socially with other sects. In Kerala Harijans converted to Christianity are not treated as equals. There are churches where there are separate enclosures and entrance for pulaya Christians and paraya Christians. Casteism exists in all religions.

Corruption in DoE

Dr S. Parameswaran, Bangalore

Congratulations to Shubhabrata Bhattacharya for unravelling the Mysteries of the Department of Electronics (17 April). If the points highlighted in the article are taken note of and appropriate action is taken, Sunday would have rendered a singular service to the growth of electronics in India.

C.K.V. Iver, Madras

Hindus, Muslims and Shahabuddin

endorse the views of Mr Ramesh (Opinion, 29 May) on the provocative article by Syed Shahabuddin, Mrs. Gandhi and the Muslim vote (20) March). If Muslims are convinced that they can no longer get justice from a liberal democracy like India they are free to cross the frontiers to the dreamy-eyed dictator's land. Can Sun-DAY prove that it is not biased by publishing an article by the editor of Organiser?

Madhukar Khatre, Ajmer

I would like to ask Mr Ramesh, whether Muslims also have not shed blood for the country? Why should Muslims who are also born and bred here be ill treated? Fanatics like Ramesh should not be tolerated. M. Abdul Ghani, Tindivanam

The hue and cry made by Syed Shahabuddin in different publications can lead to disharmony among countrymen In India all religions are equally honoured and if one community is lesser in number than the other, it is no fault of the other. The lesser community is getting proportionately the same share in every sphere of life. If promotors of each religion are forbidden to speak for and against any religion it will go a long way in promoting better understanding among the different communities.

Amar Nath Sehgal, New Delhi

There is no difference between Shahabuddin and the Muslim League members of the pre-partition days. There are few Muslims who are as bold as S. Alı Raza who openly admitted that Islam has instilled in them hatred and anger and they are victims of this hatred generated during the prepartition days (Opinion, 24 May), Mr Shahabuddin must be convinced that Muslims who migrated to Pakistan are better off, because he has stated that Indian Muslims are only bonded labourers. It is a well-known fact that Gandhiji was murdered because he was instrumental in stopping the movement of Indian Muslims to Pakistan. From the statements of Mr Shahabuddin it appears that Gandhiji sacrificed his life in vain. We have, therefore, no option but to agree with Mr Ramesh that Mr Shahabuddin and his followers have no place in India. B. R. Nanda, Lucknow

In your issue of 29 May you published a provocative letter from Mr Ramesh of Bangalore making baseless and unsubstantiated allegations against Indian Muslims in general and Mr Shahabuddin in particular. Mr Ramesh must understand that speaking against Hindus is not the same as being anti-Indian, as the country belongs to all communities. Indian Muslims admire Pakistan because the faith unites them just as Hindus admire Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Malaysia. That does not show lack of patriotism. Mr Shahabuddin speaks courageously and sincerely. M.H. Jowher, Srinagar

Communal-minded people like Ramesh are the embers which cause communal flare-ups. All his statements reflect his own dirty mind and malicious attitude. India is a secular country and each religion should tolerate the other. Why did the Hindus cry hoarse when poor harijans converted to Islam? Islam offers social equality. Let Hindus first learn to accept at least their own low-caste brethren as their own. Nasreen Rizvi, Calcutta

The Hindu religion believes in sarva dharma sama bhava whereas the basic principle of Islam is that whoever is kafir should be assassinated. Muslims fearlesly declare that Kashmir is part of Pakistan and such people should not be tolerated.

Kshama Koul, Srinagar

Why is Sunday giving so much importance to Mr Shahabuddin? Then Hindus have also every right to demand articles of Balraj Madhok or Karan Singh. Even when it comes to reporting about communal riots SUN-DAY gives importance to those in which Muslims were killed. Aniruddha Guha Ray, Calcutta

The tone of Ramesh's letter proves, if at all proof was needed, that Mr Shahabuddin's contention that Hindus maltreat Muslims in India is true. It is fanatics like Ramesh who divide humankind into bits and pieces. Sugata Dasgupta, Calcutta

Mr Ramesh is free to chide Syed Shahabuddin, who is not a spokesman of Muslims, though, at times, he projects their problems very well. But to suspect the patriotism of Indian Muslims and level slanderous and baseless charges against them reveals his narrow outlook and sheer bigotry. Indian Muslims have contributed very much to the composite culture of India and they are a part and parcel of this land Serajuddin Filosoph, Calcutta

I am appalled by Sunday's communal tone, invariably supporting the Muslims. Perhaps you should acknowledge some facts about Islamic history. No Islamic country has ever generated wealth by its own efforts, or transferred power without bloodshed. In Islamic states other religions are not toler-

V.V. Joshi, Nairobi

New maths?

A nita Pratap says that the expendi-ture of Rs 1.5 lakhs incurred every day for transporting three lakh gallons of water from Andhra Pradesh works out to be Rs two per gallon (A few drops for a water starved city, 11 May). I would like to know the logic of this calculation. These types of elementary mistakes are not in keeping with the standard of SUNDAY.

M.S. Thangavelu, Ranchi

IAF crashes

「support Kuldip Nayar's bold sugges tion that causes of the alleged spurt in aircrashes in the IAF be probed by an open enquiry (SUNDAY 8 May). In the US all serious accidents of the armed forces are publicly debated. For example, the complete proceedings of the investigation by Navy's judge advocate general in the crash of a US Marine Corps/EA-6B (4-crew electronic coung ter measure aircraft) on the flight deck of aircraft carrier USS Nimitz on 26 May 1981 causing the death of 14 persons was published in Aviation Week & Space Technology, 13 September, 1982. If the security of US armed forces is not compromised by such open debate one fails to understand how Indian security will suffer due to similar debate. In fact, ineptitude and mismanagement with equipment selection and training is hidden effectively under the security umbrella. The air safety slogan boldly declares that, "An accident does not happen; it is caused." We must know who or what causes so many accidents.

The absence of facts merely helps

speculation.

Squ. Ldr. Sujash Kumar Bain (Retd), Calcutta

Save the monkeys

ongratulations to SUNDAY. for the varticle on the brutal treatment of monkeys in the research laboratories of USA. The Janata government did well to ban the export of monkeys but stories of cruelties on monkeys, apparently sent from India have been leaking regularly. In a recent communique the joint controller of exports stated that monkeys above six pounds can be exported for research. It will indeed be a sad day if the exports of monkeys are restarted. Surely we can earn foreign exchange through some more humane way.

Dr Susmita Bhattacharya, Mhow, MP.

Same stock

Kuldip Nayar had asked why "Indian society is so barbaric after centuries of civilisation" (Indians are not a civilised people, 24 April). It is basically because Hindus and Muslims descend from the same stock. In fact, no society Indian, Islamic or Christian has been civilised in its entirety. These civilisations were sustained by what we may call the top crust and the masses generally remained inert. Occasionally the masses were whipped up to a state of frenzy, but soon reverted to their usual inert state. The poison was first spread among this peaceful society by Islamic invaders. For ages forced conversions went on and the Hindus looked on helplessly. The existing rigid caste system prevailed in the pro-Aryan civilisations too in one shape or another. A positive sign now is that harijans are slowly being accepted into the mainstream. M.B. Rao, Bombay

first met G. D. Birla in 1978 in London. He'd just published a multi-volume edition of his correspondence with Gandhi and his advisers thought the occasion demanded a little publicity. I went along-so far as I could gather, the only British journalist who thought it worthwhile to do so-to interview him in the hotel suite in Park Lane which, for 40 years, he had continued to occupy during his

visits to England.

I had no idea what to expect, had no idea of the kind of man G. D. Birla was, outside the phrases which have since attended his obituaries: "Industrialist and philanthropist...Early supporter of the Congress movement...close friend of the Mahatma." I found a tall, erect man in an expensive English suit, surrounded by the human trappings of a great patriarchy: servants, assistants, relatives. We took tea and GD talked with great charm, frankness and intelligence about himself, Gandhi and India---charm, frankness and intelligence being the qualities I'll always remember him for, though no doubt plant managers of unprofitable Birla plants saw a different side.

I remember asking him about the spread of his empire. GD began ticking off which industries were in which Indian states. Jute and cars in West Bengal. Textiles in Madhya Pradesh. Aluminium in UP. And so on. "Don't forget the tea estates in Assam," said a female relative, and GD nodded and (for once) looked bored. The truth, I discovered later, was that GD preferred to talk about anything other than how he had amassed his money. The wider economic scene, world statesmen past and present, Hinduism, the meaning of life-he would be enthusiastic and articulate about all of these. But one learned rather quickly, not to ask questions about the inner financial workings of the Birla family. It was like asking a happy English husband about his sex life. It may be a great source of pleasure, but it remains private. Questions are a gross intrusion.

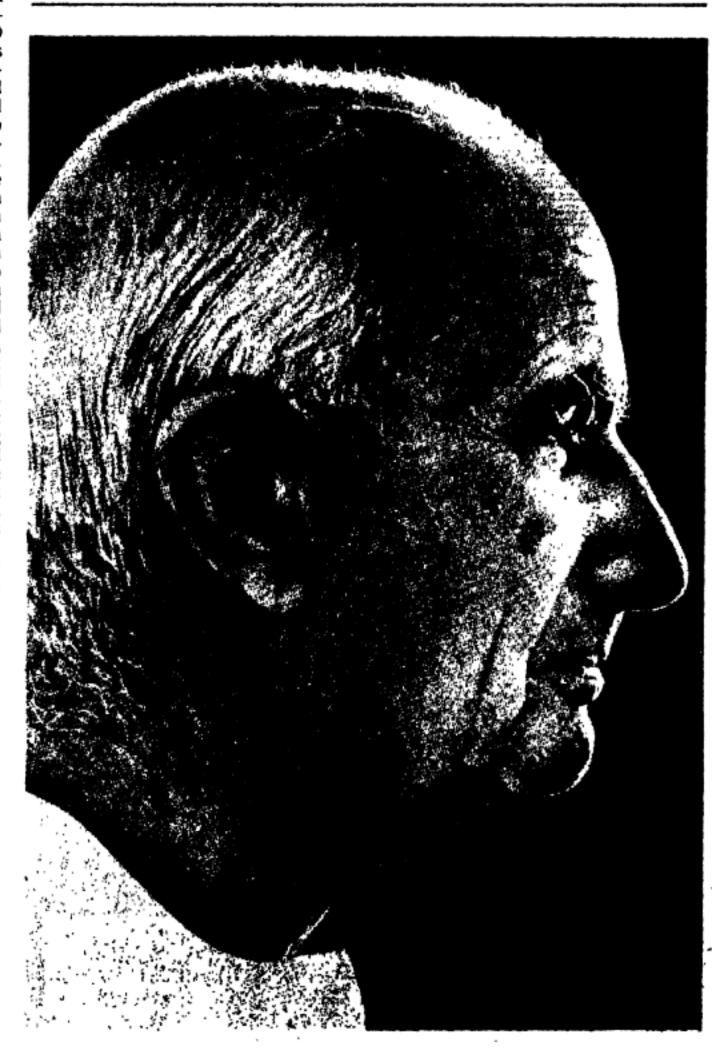
Later that morning in 1978 a photographer and myself went with GD to the statue of Gandhi which sits in the middle of a square near Euston Road. It was a cold day in late November. The photographer asked GD to sit beneath the statue on some freezing granite, and then began to boss him about in the way that photographers do. Look this way, look that, now stand, now sit again. The 84-year-old millionaire obliged and smiled-tickled, I suspect, that for once in his life he was being bossed rather than bossing. As we parted, he said: "Call on me when you next come to India. I can show you many wonderful things."

I came to India the next month, but didn't call on him. I thought the "wonderful things" invitation was only a Marwari form of politeness, in

COVER STORY

e Kin

IAN JACK profiles the genius he knew intimately, recalling conversations and impressions spread over years



the way that a common London invitation runs, "We must meet for lunch," meaning "Personally, I couldn't care less if I see you again or not." But to attribute this kind of falsity of language to G. D. Birla was a mistake. He used words with precision and care, and he traced mequite how I never discovered—to the Great Eastern Hotel, Calcutta. I came from a walk on the *maidan* one day to discover the receptionist in an unusual-and most welcome-state of animation. "Mr G. D. Birla has called you from Delhi." I asked the operator to connect me with Delhi. Again, alacrity replaced listlessness (odd and sad, I thought, how the name of India's largest capitalist is still the only way to shake up a hotel owned by Marxists—the hotel is under the management of the West Bengal government). The call came

within minutes. G. D. Birla was on the line, "Come, come, come," he said like E. M. Forster's Professor

Godbole. I went.

During the next few weeks I did indeed see many wonderful things. Jute mills, car plants, temples, insti tutes of higher education—all of them bearing the trademark "Birla." Also the mock antique, mock French interiors of many Marwari homes (Louis XV, thou knowest not what sins are committed in thy name); also the hot and sweet confections of many Marwari teas; also the overwhelming nature of Marwari hospitality. GD summoned his private Dakota aircraft from Bangalore and placed me aboard. Two Ambassador cars took me to Rajasthan. The second car, it was explained, came along in case the first broke downwhich showed a touching nervous-

L.N. Birla holding the urn containing G.D. Birla's ashes: it will never be the same



ness about the quality of this particu-

lar Birla product.

There were some ludicrous moments. At the Birla Institute of Technology in Pilani, the vice-chancellor and his complete academic staff had been assembled to meet me. There were garlands, many hands to be shaken. We went to laboratories, classrooms, the art gallery, the temple. Frequently, GD telephoned from Delhi for progress reports. How was his guest? Was he enjoying himself? What were they showing him? At length I was driven to a large field. I stepped from the car on to a red carpet, whereupon two small girls handed me bouquets and conducted me to a chair on a podium. Then the field, which was filled with 2,000 schoolchildren erupted into gymnastics, displays of horse riding, hockey. After an hour or so, a band appeared to play selections from the Sound of Music. The entire assembly marched past the podium, eyes swivelled right, hands went up to foreheads. "Stand up and salute," whispered the vice-chancellor. I did.

"Look," I felt like saying as I stood garlanded once again on the steps of the Dakota, waving farewell to the small multitude which had gathered on the airstrip, "look, you are making the most terrible mistake. I am not Princess Margaret, simply a humble journalist." But in fact neither personage-royalty or journalistwould have been the correct definition at that moment. I was simply being given the treatment accorded to any guest of Mr G. D. Birla.

Ie was never less than interesting and sometimes he could be fascinating; for he had, after all, been intimately connected with some of the momentous events of the 20th century. He spoke with the frankness of an old man who had nothing left to fear. He was not a great lover of the Nehru family, and any feelings of warmth which may have existed did not stretch beyond Jawaharlal. I asked him once what he thought of Morarji's son, Kanti Lal.

"Stupid," said GD.

And Sanjay?

"Wicked and stupid," said GD.

On another occasion, he applied much the same language to the Prime Minister herself. Hismiddle son, KK, was with us at the time and looked embarrassed. He took me aside later. "You know," he told me, "my father didn't mean it."

But such absolute condemnation of other people was unusual in GD. He had a remarkably wide range of friendships-including, at their opposite poles, Gandhi and Churchill. This was possible, I think, because, as a man who learned to count at the age of four but only learned to read when aged nine, he had what might be called an arithmetical approach to people. He would subtract what he didn't like-Gandhi's anti-industrialism, Churchill's econo-

The empire builder

A young man, barely in his teens, walks with purposeful strides into the lift. Clad in a dhoti and a kurta, he enters the lift and is quickly surrounded by a few suited Englishmen, who stare at him hostilely. "Look at the arrogance of this native. How dare he come into a lift with us Englishmen," they seem to be saving. Upstairs, stepping out of the lift, the young man in a firm tone says that he wants to meet one of the junior British executives of the firm. "Wait," he is told while he is shown the bench meant for peons to sit on. He does not and in a short while he is informed that the British executive would not like to meet him and it would be better if he did not remain in the office. Smarting with rage and humiliation, the young man rushes down the stairs and out of the office. He pledges to himself that he will never suffer the indignity of being humiliated by Englishmen again.

That was at the turn of the century and the young man was Ghanshyamdas Birla. And the indignity he suffered steeled his resolve: it would be his earnest endeavour to break the monopoly of the English. When he had been driven out of the British business house, he had been a jute and gunny broker but he would forget all that now. He would fight the English on their own grounds. Ghanshyamdas would go into industry.

But it needed courage of conviction to break the monopoly of the English. While finance was controlled by the Imperial Bank and its English officers, jute was transported on boats owned by Englishmen. Trading in jute was done on the Baltic Exchange in London, again by Englishmen. Could G.D. Birla go into other industries? He started scouting around and decided to go into cotton. Again he faced Englishmen, for cotton cloth was imported by the British from Manchester in England. Coal, the source of all energy too was held by Englishmen.

But GD, as he was known among friends, was firm in his resolve. Start a business he would and he did. A small cotton mill, nearly out of production, was bought near Delhi. G.D. Birla would train himself in the management of an industry. Within a year he was ready: an achievement for a man whose formal education had not gone beyond memorising a few pages of the First Book of Reading. At 24, G. D. Birla took two projects in hand: a jute and a cotton mill. This time the

industries would be totally Indianowned. Shares were floated by G. D. Birla and they were oversubscribed. The Englishmen were not to be outdone. Transport charges for jute were specially hiked for the Birlas, and the Imperial Bank was asked not to provide the working capital. The problem was solved when a kind English businessman intervened to get them the loan from a British broker but at a very high rate of interest.

Then started the search for a place to set up the jute mill. A British firm obviously dealing in the same business, fearing the loss of monopoly, started buying small plots of land in the area in an effort to thwart the Birlas. Imagine their surprise when they discovered that GD had not only bought land, away from where the Englishmen were buying land, but had also started



G.D. Birla: from stride to stride

building the factory on it. At the end of it all G. D. Birla wanted to become a member of the Association of Jute Millowners, a wholly British organisation. Despite his best efforts G. D. Birla was unable to be a part of the association.

Shortly after that came the cotton mill. When G. D. Birla's own brother Jugalkishore Birla, started to import cloth from Japan, the British hit back. They would have nothing of it and India would have to buy cloth from Britain. Once G. D. Birla settled down, he thought of diversifying into fields of business which the British monopolised: paper, shipping, tea, staple fibre and aluminium. For this he asked his brothers to join him. Thus was formed Birla Brothers in 1919. And throughout the thought uppermost in his mind was: the country had to

be made self-sufficient, whatever the costs. And in his endeavours the Birla family came in close contact with the nationalist leaders of that time. The association with Mahatma Gandhi started when he came back from South Africa and lasted till the day he was assassmated in Birla House in Delhi, And G. D. Birla became the chief source of funds for Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress Party, even though he always did not agree with Gandhiji's political programmes. So great was the trust Gandhiji had m G. D. Birla that he once wrote: "God has given me mentors, and you are one of them."

With independence came new ideas. G. D. Birla decided that traditional industries would not be able to boost the Indian economy. The only way out: branch out to something new. Henry Ford had created a storm in America and Europe with his car. In India it was left to the house of Birlas, under the able guidance of GD, to make cars and the common man's form of transport: cycles. British technical knowhow was acquired, experimented with and put to use and the Amabassdor cars were born.

Another pioneering venture made by GD was in the field of paper. India had been buying paper from Sweden. But it was discovered that good paper could be made from bamboos with indegenous knowhow. Soon there were other industries like cement, sugar, industrial machinery and textiles: all needed to make India self-sufficient. GD believed that an "economic climate that feeds on itself and it is not dependent on external stimuli" was needed for the country and he worked hard for that.

With industry came his desire to uplift the people of the country through education. Thus was formed the Birla education trust which today educates nearly 30,000 children in the country. GD puts his ideas about his family's ideals in his book, India Progressing: "It has been the policy of the house of the Birlas not to build up business just to accumulate capital but to develop unexplored lines, harness the undeveloped resources of the country, promote knowhow, create skilled labour and managerial talent, spread education and add to the efforts of the leaders of the country who, throughout...have been struggling to build a new, independent India, free from want, the curse of unemployment, ignorance and disease.'

Tirthankar Ghosh



G.D. Birla (in spectacles) with his brothers Jugalkishore, Rameshwardas and Brijmohan: outstanding among the brothers

mic imperialism and blatant ignorance of India-and ther count up the qualities he admired or found useful. He was a very pragmatic man, but unlike many other pragmatic men his pragmatism overlaid a moral base-his Sanatan Dharma, the eternal religion of duty.

His pragmatism and morality often came into conflict and left unresolved contradictions. It was odd, for example, to hear him say: "My grandsons disagree with me, but I think caste is what holds this country together. Abolish caste and India is in trouble." Could this be the same man who so staunchly supported Gandhi's harijan campaign?

More recently, watching Attenborough's film on Gandhi, I couldn't help thinking of GD during the scenes which showed piles of imported cloth being set ablaze. I wonder (I thought, perhaps uncharitably) how many new lines of looms Mr Birla put into production as a

result?

I often wondered what, if anything, GD wanted from me. "If a Birla gives something," said the common wisdom of my friends, "then he will want something in return." Some suggested he was looking for a biographer. I asked GD about this. "Certainly," he said, "no Indian can write my biography because biography isn't an Indian skill." Hagiography was the Indian line, he said. But no, he didn't want a British biographer either. I think all he may have wanted was to explain a little of himself and India to me, bas .

In the event, and in his own case. his view of Indian biography was proved right. Easily the best obituary of him-leaving all Indian news-

papers, including his own Hindustan Times, far behind—appeared in the London Times. That would have pleased him as a venerable Anglophile: an Anglophilia which overcame (here again the arithmetical process) his early bitterness over the "racial arrogance" of the British that had propelled him towards the Congress Party. He admired Mrs Thatcher and he admired what he saw as the honesty of British busi-

G.D. Birla: a pragmatist all his life



ness methods, even though in the latter he was beginning to grow disappointed.

"You know," he said the last time I saw him in London, "I bought a factory from a man in Birmingham recently. He wanted half the money over the table and the rest deposited quietly in a Swiss bank." GD seemed shocked.

What did he believe in? Dharma, of course, and good work and loyalty, but also in profitability and, to an almost religious extent, the redeeming power of capitalism. Unless Indian capitalism succeeded, he told Churchill, then nothing could stem the tide of communism. Thus he left factories and temples, mills and schools in almost equal measure. I asked him once about his rival: J. R. D. Tata. "He has lots of rupees," said GD "but I wonder, is he happy?"

Not the least of his bequests is his illuminating correspondence with Gandhi, which shows how the independence movement was rather more than a matter of lying down in front of railway trains. All political movements need money, and GD supplied it generously, even if his foresight included a large measure of self-interest. And if one sentence could sum up the complicated nature of his friend. Gandhi, then that sentence comes in a letter from GD in London to the Mahatma's secretary. Mahadev Desai. It is this: "I will bring the books on bee-keeping and cabinet government."

All in all, G. D. Birla has not given Indian capitalism a bad name-unlike (and I write this last sentence after a visit to the shameless blackmoney opulence of a Delhi hotel) many of those who came after him.

What happens to the Empire?

And where does the Birla empire go from here? The unifying symbol, Ghanshyam Das Birla, is gone. Will the sons now head in different and contradictory directions? TOOSHAR PANDIT investigates.

t was while the family was celebrating his 89th birthday on 21 April, the day coinciding with Ramnavami, that G.D.Birla dropped the hint: one of the prize possessions of his empire, the Jiyajeerao Cotton Mills, should go to one of his grandsons, Sudarshan Kumar. And only a day before G.D.Birla died in London on 11 June, Sudarshan Kumar accompanied by one of G.D.Birla's trusted aides, D.P.Mandelia, left Delhi for Birlanagar in Gwalior, where the company is based, to assume charge at a formal ceremony. The balance sheet of the Mills for 1981-82, the last available, however shows one of G.D Birla's nephews, Madho Prasad, as the chairman of the board of directors of the company. Normally, he should have been presumed to be in control of the company. But then, the Birlas cannot be judged by conventional yardsticks.

The joint family system still survives among the Birlas but certainly not in its purest form: a lot of improvisations have been carried out to bring the system in step with changing times and changing needs. As the number of Birla enterprises multiplied, the members of the family chose to divide among themselves the managerial responsibilities. Each member got some of the family units to which he invariably added some more through his enterprise Who among the family members will manage which of the family units is decided through a complicated system of internal arrangements of which very few outsiders can claim to have any knowledge. And under these arrangements the person who controls a Birla unit may not be the one whose name appears on the books as the chairman. The concept, perfected by G D. Birla for managing the massive Birla empire (1981 assets: Rs 2161 crores; turnover: Rs 1692 crores; and profits after tax: Rs •110 crores) is known in business. circles as the concept of the "line of actual control" in which the Birla who actually controls a unit is the person who matters the most. And G.D. Birla always had the final say in the choice of the person who would control one or the other unit.

Not in business alone, in the private lives of the Birlas also, G.D. Birla loomed like a colossus with his penchant for discipline and austerity. A Birla is supposed to switch off the lights when he goes out of his room. He has to get up at five in the

morning, be back at his home by 7.30 pm and go to bed by 9.30 pm. He has to take his wife with him when he goes to a club or a movie. All the members of the Birla family must have dinner together at least once a week. They must not drink nor can they indulge in wasteful expenditure. Even senior Birla executives

are expected to follow a similar lifestyle—be in their homes by 9.30 pm and to be teetotallers. It has always been like this: G.D. Birla made the rules and the others obeyed.

The first thing that D.P. Mandelia did after returning to Delhi from Gwalior was to ring up G.D. Birla at































(I to r) 1st row: Shivnarain and Baldeodas; 2nd row: Jugalkishore, Rameshwardas, Ghanshyamdas, and Brijmohan; 3rd row: Gangapra sad and Madhoprasad; 4th row: Lakshminiwas, Krishnakumar and Basantkumar; 5th row: Sudarshan, Aditya, C.K. and Sidhartha.

跨域领导队队 指维度单倍人 医帕氏征性抗反应 化 his Park Towers apartment in London, on the morning of Saturday 11 June, to inform him that his wish had been carried out and Sudarshan Kumar had taken charge of the Jiyajeerao Mills. G.D. Birla could not personally come to answer the call because he was critically ill. The information was immediately passed on to the important members of the Birla family. Sudarshan Kumar relayed the message over telephone to G.D. Birla's eldest son Lakshminiwas at his Calcutta residence. Lakshminiwas immediately asked his grandson Sidhartha Kumar to put a call through to his cousin Ganga Prasad, who also happened to be in London. Ganga Prasad could not be contacted. Sidhartha Kumar then tried

one of his wife's relatives in London. From him he came to know that the grand old man of Indian industry had by now passed away. The king was dead.

Immediately Lakshminiwas and Sidhartha left for the airport to catch the flight to Delhi. They took the same flight, a practice never followed by the Birlas. What is more, they bought their tickets from the airlines counter in person: again, an extremely rare Birla act. By the time the two reached Delhi, radio and TV had announced G.D. Birla's death and the family members already gathered there were in deep grief. Early reports suggested that while he was on his usual morning stroll (he used to walk a distance of about

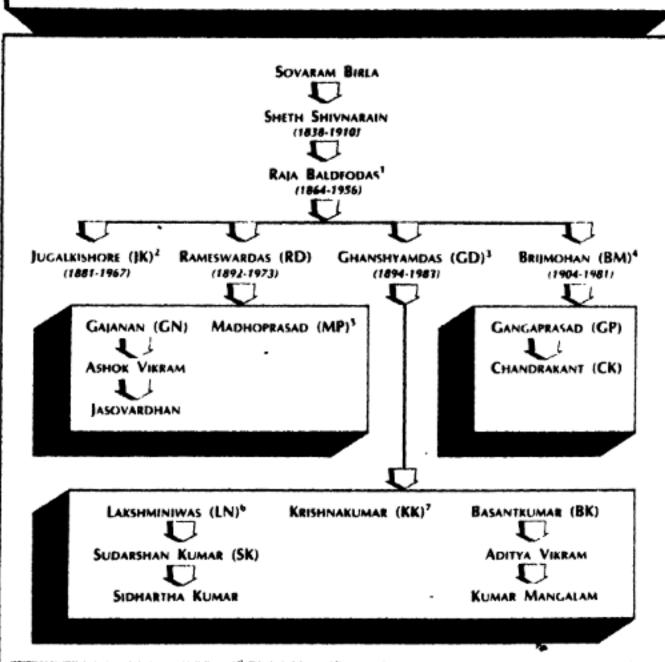
five km every morning) G.D. Birla had suddenly collapsed. His nephew Ganga Prasad, who was with him, stopped a taxi and took G.D. Birla to a nearby hospital. There the doctors pronounced him dead.

The details trickled in much later. As G.D. Birla was nearing the end of his walk he complained of breathing difficulties to an aide, a senior executive of the Birla group's Mysore Cements Ltd., who was with him. The officer immediately halled a taxi and took G.D. Birla to Park Towers. As he seemed to be in great pain, the officer, having placed G.D. Birla on a sofa in the ground floor of the building rang up Ganga Prasad at Dorchster Hotel, situated within a stone's throw from Park Towers. Soon Ganga Prasad arrived with his wife, called an ambulance and took G.D. Birla to a hospital. G.D. Birla died on the way. The doctors tried their best to revive him but failed. That was how the end came.

fter prolonged consultations Among themselves, the members of the Birla family decided that two of G.D. Birla's three sons-Krishna Kumar and Basant Kumar-would go to London with other family members to attend their father's funeral. G.D. Birla was being cremated in London because he wanted to be cremated in the city where he died. The eldest son, Lakshminiwas, however, was advised to stay back to discharge traditional obligations at home It is customary in the Marwari community for a senior member of the bereaved family to be available to people calling on him to share the family's grief for three days after the funeral. So having seen off his brothers and other family members who left Delhi in batches on 12 and 13 June, Lakshminiwas returned to Calcutta on 14 June morning. Among the immediate family members of G.D. Birla only two others did not attend the funeral. One is his sister, Mrs Chandrakala Daga, because of ill health; and the other is his nephew, Ganga Prasad's son Chandrakant, who was asked to keep Lakshminiwas company.

With so much money concentrated in so few hands there is bound to be some undercurrents of stress and tension running through the family. Indeed, G.D. Birla himself encouraged internal competition among the family members. As a result, in subjective terms, the prosperity of different branches of the family has been uneven (see box). For example, the cream of the Birla empire is in the hands of G.D. Birla's immediate family: G.D. Birla's sons and grandsons control most of the top 25 Birla units. Of the three giants that G.D. Birla kept to himself, one-the Mysore Cements Ltd.—is likely to go to his grandson Sudarshan Kumar, and two others-Hindusthan Aluminium Corporation Ltd., and Gwalior Rayon Silk Mfg. & Wvg. Ltd.-to another

The first family of Indian business



¹Raja Baldeodas had also three daughters: Mrs Bhagwan Devi Mohta, Mrs Jai Devi Kothari, and Mrs Kamala Devi Mantri.

²No children. Brought up G. D. Birla's eldest son LN as his own.

³G. D. Birla's daughters are: Mrs Chandrakala Daga, Mrs Anushila Devi Tapuriah, and Mrs Santi Devi Maheswari.

4B. M. Birla's daughter is Mrs Gangadevi Somani

⁵No children

Son by first wife

⁷No son, daughters

Note: In the Birla family the female descendents do not have inheritance rights as the family follows the mitakshara tradition.

grandson, Aditya Birla. Obviously, the family of G.D. Birla has been more enterprising than the families of his other brothers. Again, of the families of his three sons, the family of his youngest son Basant Kumar appears to be doing better than the others. G.D. Birla was particularly fond of his youngest son because he had lost his mother while still a child. Subsequently, the old man got very attached to Basant Kumar's son Aditya. So much so that while in Calcutta G.D. Birla used to stay mostly with Basant Kumar and while in Bombay with Aditya. G.D. Birla's blessings certainly helped the family of his youngest son. His eldest son Lakshminiwas manages the bulk of the family's trusts. The second son Krishna Kumar got least of the family business but made most out of it

by sheer enterprise. Most of the units he runs now have either been acquired or built up by his personal enterprise. Such uneven control over the family wealth, however, can, always be a source of tension in a joint family where all members are supposed to be equal.

In the past, too, such tensions surfaced. For example, G.D. Birla wanted the family to stick to traditional industries like jute and textile. And initially, he did not approve of his younger brother Brijmohan, going for non-traditional industries like automobiles, paper, and engineering. Later, of course, G.D. Birla himself went for non-traditional industries like cement and aluminium, but that was much later. And only after the death of their elder brother, Rameswardas, in 1973 did

G.D. Birla and Brijmohan come to terms and again became very close to each other. Another member of the family who continues to cause ripples is Ashok Vikram whose father Gajanan was disowned by the family in the late 1940s after he ran into trouble over a love affair, reportedly with the wife of one of the officers of Birla group's Texmaco, which he was then managing. Gajanan's brother Madho Prasad, who does not have any children, immediately took Ashok Vikram under his wing and later Brijmohan also promoted him as his protege. Although quite a few companies have been placed under him, Ashok Vikram thinks that he has not got a fair deal and continues to press for a larger share in the family assets, especially a major say in the running

The Birla empire: Whose is what

The following is a list of top 23 units of the Birla empire educational and charitable trusts, some 40 temples and showing their worth and who runs them. In terms of dharamsalas, a number of educational institutions, two assets they account for more than Rs 1400 crores. It will hospitals, a nursing home and a planetorium. The also be seen that 16 of these companies (combined assets: Rs 930 crores; combined turnover: Rs 1300 According to a statement made by Ghulam Nabi Azad, crores) are managed by G. D. Birla's direct descendents. Among them B. K. Birla and his son Aditya together Rajya Sabha on 14 March 1983, the Birlas had assets control the prime units. According to a report of the worth Rs 2161.55 crores in 1981. Their turnover for that industrial licensing committee, the Birlas have direct year was Rs 1691.69 crores and it fetched a profit of Rs control over some 200 industrial units and indirect 110.42 crores after paying taxes. In terms of prosperity control over another 70. Barring iron and steel, the Birla the Birlas are ranked number two in the country, after empire embraces almost all the major sectors of indus- the Tatas (1981 assets: Rs 2389.77 crores; turnover: Rs try. Besides, the group also manages a number of 1840.16 crores; and profits after tax: Rs 154 crores).

group's investment in real estate is also substantial. deputy minister for law, justice and company affairs, in

| SI no | Name of the unit | Year founded | Nature of Industry | Chairman . | Assets Rs crores | Turnover Rs crores | Net profit Rs crores | Year ending |
|----------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Hindusthan Aluminium Corpn. | 1958 | Metal | G.D.BIRLA1 | 202 | 117 | 04 | 1981 |
| 2 | Mysore Cements | 1958 | Cement | G.D.BIRLA ² | 69 | 22 | 03 | 1982 |
| 3 | Zuari Agro Chemicals | 1967 | Chemicals | K.K.BIRLA | 72 | 118 | 10 | 1982 |
| 4 | Texmaco | 1939 | Eng. | K.K.BIRLA | 33 | 88 | 02 | 1981 |
| 5 | India Steamship | 1928 | Shipping | K.K.BIRLA | 109 | 53 | - 07 | 1982 |
| 6 | Ratnakar Shipping | 1960 | Shipping | K.K.BIRLA | 63 | 19 | .07 | 1982 |
| 7 | Sutlej Cotton Mills | 1934 | Textiles | K.K.BIRLA | 24 | 36 | 01 | 1982 |
| 8 | Birla Cotton Spg. & Wvg. Mills | 1920 | Textiles | K.K.BIRLA | 17 | 39 | -0.7 | 1981 |
| 9 | Century Spinning & Mfg | 1897 | Textiles | B.K.BIRLA | 151 | 208 | 13 | 1982 |
| 10 | Kesoram Ind. & Cotton Mills | 1919 | Textiles | B.K.BIRLA | 41 | 112 | 06 | 1982 |
| 11 | Jayshree Tea & Ind. | 1945 | Tea | B.K.BIRLA | 54 | 53 | 0.5 | 1982 |
| 12 | Bharat Commerce & Industries | 1945 | Textiles | B.K.BIRLA3 | 32 | 74 | 01 | 1981 |
| 13 | Gwalior Rayon Silk Mfg. & Wvg. | 1947 | Textiles | ADITYA BIRLA | 22 | 326 | 07 | 1982 |
| 14 | Sree Digvijay Woolen Mills | 1948 | Wool | S.K.BIRLA | 11 | 15 | 02 | 1982 |
| 15 | OCM | 1972 | Wool | S.K.BIRLA | 17 | 19 | 0.7 | 1982 |
| 16 | Universal Electric | 1961 | Elec. | S.K.BIRLA | 13 | 16 | 0.3 | 1981 |
| 17 | Jiyajeerao Cotton Mills | 1921 | Textiles | M.P.BIRLA4 | 54 | 109 | 0.8 | 1982 |
| 18 | Birla Jute Mfg. Co | 1920 | Jute/Met | M.P.BIRLA | 93 | 96 | 01 | 1982 |
| 19 | Bihar Alloy Steels | 1965 | Metal | M.P.BIRLA | 47 | 48 | -03 | 1982 |
| 20 | Hindustan Motors | 1942 | Auto | G.P.BIRLAS | 147 | 304 | 09 | 1982 |
| 21 | Orient Paper and Industries | 1936 | Paper | G.P.BIRLA | 54 | 60 | 0.6 | 1982 |
| 22 . | Hyderabad Asbestos Cement | 1946 | Cement | C. K. BIRLA | 40 | 72 | 04 | 1981 |
| 23 | National Eng. Industries | 1946 | Rollers | C.K. BIRLA | 37 | 58 | 03 | 1982 |

Likely to go to Aditya Bırla

Source: Bombay Stock Exchange Official Directory, 1983; Business Standard, Calcutta; and the available balance sheets. The figures given in the chart are not precise and have been rounded up to nearest approximation.

Likely to go to S.K. Birla

^{&#}x27;May be placed under Ashok Vikram Birla

S.K. Birla in effective control 'C.K Birla in effective control

of the family's moneyspinner, the Century Spinning and Mfg. Co Ltd., now being managed by Basant Kumar.

However, one should not read too much into these differences. The wonder is that the Birlas have survived and prospered against all the different pulls and pressures they have faced in the five generations between Shivnarain, the acknowledged founder of the empire and Ashok Vikram, spanning over a century. There are, of course, people who tend to exaggerate the differences to belittle the Birla family. Foremost among them are some jealous industrialists who feel that one way of improving their own image is to smear the image of the fantastically successful business groups in India. Then there is a section of the group's own executives who believe that by playing one Birla against another they could acquire more importance. Some conflicts in the family are, of course, due to the inevitable clash of ideas between one generation and the next.

With G.D. Birla's death, the Birlas will certainly be not the same. He, like a massive banyan tree, not only sent down new roots as he advanced in age but also protected the family since he launched Birla Brothers at the age of 24. What is more important, his towering personality kept the family together and since he was the only court of appeal for the family, he could easily sort out even the most difficult family hassles. His death has certainly created a void which cannot be filled by any of the surviving Birlas. According to the Birla tradition, G.D. Birla's mantle, or course, has fallen, as it must, on the eldest of the surviving Birlas, Lakshminiwas. He will certainly try to live up to what is expected of him and play the role of the prime moderator within the family. But he is no G.D. Birla and can never become one. Lakshminiwas' role will be largely ceremonial and without doubt other members of the family will henceforth have a larger say in family affairs. Whether that will generate new conflicts or tensions within the family remains to be seen but it can be said for certain that G.D. Birla's death is neither going to break up the empire nor lead to a battle for succession among the family members.

One reason is that G.D. Birla, a methodical person as he was, had been taking insurance against any such possibility for a long time and by the time he died he had seen to it that the Birlas did not have any reason to fight over their assets after his death. This he ensured by distributing control of the Birla units among the family members along clearly defined lines. Even on a theoretical level, it is not possible to imagine that the Birlas would fight among themselves over the family's

The last goodbye

It was a quiet and simple ceremony at the Golders Green electric crematorium in London.
Amidst a vast gathering of close
friends, members of his family, at
4.45 pm on 13 June, Ghanshyamdas
Birla's last rites were completed.
Mr Birla's wish was that he be
cremated wherever he died. His
philosophy, according to Mr
Mathur Krishnamurthy, the priest
from the Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan,
who conducted the last rites, was
that he was a citizen of the world.

The end had been sudden. And as the news spread, members of the Birla family flew to London for the final ceremony. On 13 June the funeral procession threaded its way in a convoy of cars from the Freston Road Mortuary to the picturesque crematorium at Golders Green. Soon cars lined the avenue at Hoop Lane where the crematorium is located. About 300 people came to pay their last respects to the 89-year-old patriarch of the Birla industrial empire.

In a fawn coloured coffin, Mr Birla's body was carried to the west chapel of the crematorium. The coffin was then placed on a raised

table and the mourners placed wreaths and flowers of all hues and colours on the coffin. On the dais inside the chapel, priests chanted mantras as they conducted the final Hindu rituals. Portions of the Bhagvad Gita, which Mr G. D. Birla used to particularly revere, were read out, as also the eighteenth chapter of the book. Mourners continued to throng the chapel as the *bhajan* "Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram" was sung: it was the same bhajan which Mahatma Gandhi, who was greatly admired by Mr G. D. Birla, had popularised at the prayer meetings he used to hold in Birla House in New Delhi.

A few minutes of silence followed the bhajan, after which members of the Birla family offered quiet prayers. Some of his close family members broke down as they placed flowers on the coffin. By 4.30 pm the service was over and to the repeated singing of the prayer, "Sri Krishna Govinda Hare Mura Hare..." Mr Birla's body was carried by some close male members of his family to be cremated. Then, within four minutes it was all over.

Seetha Unninayar in London

wealth for the simple reason that they have too much to be shared among too few. Imagine, 12 persons sharing an asset of Rs 2161 croresan asset that grew from a capital of around Rs 30 crores. None of them can possibly use up even a fraction of the money that they get even if they lived for generations. In fact, the problem of the Birlas has never been the money, but men. They have perennially been so short of the manpower needed to manage the empire that most of the Birlas had to interrupt their education early to take charge of units of the family business. Five generations of the Birlas could, therefore, produce only two graduates, an MBA from Switzerland, and an MIT graduate in enineering. Among the elder Birlas, Madhoprasad has no children; Gangaprasad has just one; Lakshminiwas, one son; and Krishnakumar, no sons. In the next generation there are only three persons who could have any claim to the Birla fortune. Normally, a battle of succession is triggered off when there are too many people claiming too little

If the Birlas fight at all among themselves it will be for influence. Here again, apart from G.D. Birla's second son Krishna Kumar, none of the other Birlas is known to have any apparent interest in politics. In their quiet way, all the surviving Birlas might try to improve upon their

areas of influence or their respective images in business circles and the public, but this will be more like a friendly match than real competition. It is the cold logic of high finance, rather than anything else, that should keep the Birlas together. The Birlas control a massive empire through an intricate pattern of intercorporate investment even though the family's shareholding in the companies they control adds up to only 0.18 per cent of the total assets and about 1.8 per cent of the total paid up capital of those companies. In terms of absolute amount in a capital of Rs 169.66 crores, the Birlas' contribution is only about Rs 3 crores. As it is, the Birlas have been skating on thin ice and their success story is largely the story of their managerial genius. Above all, the Birlas are the Birlas because the family is united. That is the source of the empire's growth and strength. If some among them have prospered more by promnew units, they could do so because the entire family was with him and because he could cash in on the family's clout and goodwill.

in on the family's clout and goodwill. If any one of them wants to withdraw his share from the pool, he is not likely to survive long. Gajanan is an example. He carried the surname Birla, but because the Birlas had disowned him, he was not much of a success: he ended up with only a playing card unit and some other

stray businesses.

G.D. Birla and the Congress

GIRISH MATHUR traces the role played by the patriarch of the Birla empire in shaping the policies of the Congress in pre-Independence India.

hanshyamdas Birla has been described as the doyen of Indian industrialists, a titan among them, and one of the pioneers of Indian industrialisation. But he was much more than that. His long association with Gandhiji has been men tioned, and President Zail Singh has referred to his contribution to India's freedom movement. There were other industrialists also who were close to Gandhiji and who either participated in the freedom struggle, like Jamnalal Bajaj, or helped it in many other ways like Sarabhai. But GD's association with Gandhiji and his contribution to the national movement were of a different kind. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has referred to him as a "spokesman of Indian industry," and it was precisely in that role, not in his individual capacity, that he contributed to the attainment of freedom of India.

He was consistent in his fight for the interests of the emerging Indian industrial capitalism. In 1920-21 he came out for fiscal autonomy which meant full protection to Indian industry, in 1922-24 he was in the forefront of the campaign against the government's currency policy, demanding full gold standard and Rupee-Sterling ratio at one rupee being equivalent to 1 sh. 4d. instead of 18 pence. In the Legislative Assembly (as the central legislature was then called; the provinces had legislative councils), he took up an uncompromising position against imperial preferences and resigned on this issue in 1930. In the second round table conference, he worked hard against inclusion of financial safeguards (which meant British control over Indian finances) in what later became the Government of India Act of 1935.

Although close to Gandhiji right from the time of latter's return from South Africa, GD did not join his satyagraha sabha which some other Bombay and Ahmedabad businessmen did, but went on cooperating with Gandhiji in his other activities. Against the advice of Gandhiji, he became a member of the Assembly in 1926 from Benaras-Gorakhpur constituency on the ticket of Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lajpat Rai's Nationalist Party, not on that of the Swaraj Party. Motilal Nehru who then led the Swaraj Party had to complain to Gandhiji that Birla was financing the two leaders' efforts to "capture" the Congress and create

divisions in the Swaraj Party. Birla did not contribute to the Swarai Party funds and Motilal Nehru had to seek fináncial support for his party from Bombay industrialists who had promised Rs 75,000 but gave only Rs 25,000, and that too while drawing his (and the Swarajists') attention to their financial and economic problems. Motilal told them bluntly that they had not raised these problems when they had promised their donation and that it could not be linked with their problems But GD had no compunction in intervening on their behalf with Motilal Nehru when he was the acting Congress president (after the then President Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest) during the 1930-31 civil disobedience, the accompanying boycott of foreign goods had an adverse effect on the fortunes of Bombay textile millowners.

GD's distrust of the Swarajists was not entirely misplaced. The government had brought before the Assembly two Bills in 1929, the Public Safety Bill ("to check the dissemination in British India from other countries of certain forms of propaganda" i.e., dissemination of communism, and the Trades Disputes Bill ("to make provision for the investigation and settlement of trade disputes" i.e., to break strikes). These were equated by Motilal to the Rowlatt or Black Bills of 1919 and were opposed by the Swarajists, while the Bombay millowners supported them-the

arrest of the communists in the Meerut conspiracy case had restored industrial peace in Bombay after the great strike wave of 1928 and the government's labour policy had reduced the powerful Girni Kamgar Union (55,000 members) to a mere skeleton (800 members). And what was worse from their point of view was that Motilal Nehru had come forward to make arrangements for the defence of Meerut prisoners. But GD found that Malaviya and Lajpat Rai could not deliver the goods— Lajpat Rai's letters to him, included in his book, Under the shadow of the Mahatma, indicate why he was disappointed by them. Although GD did not leave them, he was one with Sarabhai in holding that "if there is anyone who can obtain these (the economic demands of the industry) it is the Congress" and advising the Bombay textile owners accordingly.

From then onwards GD appears in a new role of, as he wrote to Rajaji, "having to defend Englishmen before Bapu and Bapu before Englishmen" which meant interpreting the British point of view to Gandhiji and his views to the British. Under the shadow...and his Hindi volumes, Bapu ki prem prasadi (or offerings of love from Bapu which, I am told, have been published in English as well) reveal how he devoted himself-he claims "with Bapu's blessings"-to fostering an understanding between the two from 1930 onwards. He went to England and

G.D. Birla in a reflective mood: an eventful life



sought to influence those who were involved in making Indian policy. On the Indian side, he kept Gandhiji informed of the views of the British rulers. He wrote to Gandhiji who too used to write to him, regularly. To Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji's secretary, he wrote with greater freedom, and Mahadev Desai also kept him informed. He enjoyed the trust of many senior Congress leaders.Rajendra Babu has written in his autobiography how Birla helped him out whenever he found himself in financial difficulties. Jayaprakash Narayan was actually on his payroll till long after becoming the general secretary of the Congress Socialist Party. Sardar Patel and Rajaji were even more amenable to his influence, and he had particularly close relations with Pantji and Bidhan Roy. After independence there was a "scandal" in Bihar: a number of Congress leaders had received Birla lands which they had to either return or give away to charitable trusts. But all this helped him to smoothen the way for his politics of reconciliation.

All this, however, does not mean that GD's influence became the decisive factor in determining Gandhiji's and Congress politics. If this had been so, the Congress would never have adopted the policy it did after World War II began and would certainly not have lunched the Quit India movement. Birla wanted a British-Congress reconciliation, for which he had worked all along, to continue particularly during the war when the need of the British rulers for maintaining war supplies opened new opportunities for Indian industry. Nobody was more conscious of the limitations of his influence than Birla himself, as he wrote in one of his letters, and for him the interests of Indian industry were supreme. On the eve of the transfer of power and

at a time when, according to Gandhiji's biographer, Tendulkar, "the government tried to sidetrack the issue of Independence by talking of industrialisation of India," he defied Gandhiji's wishes and accompanied a delegation of leading Indian industrialists to England and America for arranging post-war economic collaboration.

Where Birla succeeded was in weaning the Congres away from the path of struggle after the collapse of the 1930 and 1932 movements which had created additional problems for the Indian industry already faced with the consequences of the worldwide depression Birla also succeeded in bringing the Congress around to work the 1935 Act by accepting office under it. He had to use all his persuasive powers on both sides-on the British to extract the maximum fiscal autonomy on the one hand and provincial autonomy on the other to facilitate industrial growth, and on Gandhiji and the Congress leadership to "sell" provincial autonomy to them. The biggest hurdle in his way as far as Gandhiji and the Congress leadership were concerned was Jawaharlal Nehru. Birla had sought to put Nehru under his obligation as well by offering him financial help, but Nehru had declined. How Birla made Nehru ineffective is a fascinating story reconstructed by S. Gopal (chapter 14 of the first volume of his biography of Nehru) and Bipan Chandra ("Jawaharlal Nehru and the capitalist class, 1936" in his collection Nationalism and colonialism in India) on the basis of the private papers of Bombay industrialist Purshottamdas Thakurdas (PT) and GD's correspondence.

In a series of articles in the Nationlal Herald in 1939, Nehru reviewed the developments, "From Lucknow

G.D. Birla (extreme left) with Gandhi: a decisive role in Gandhiji's politics



to Tripuri" and wrote that as he assumed Congress presidency at the Lucknow session in 1936 he decided to bridge the gulf between the older leaders and the socialists. It is clear from Gopal's and Chandra's references to the PT papers and from GD's correspondence in the Hindi volumes and Under the shadow-...that GD's effort was to widen the gulf between the two and reduce the effectiveness of Nehru and the Socialists. (Incidentally, Masani's autobiography suggests that he and JP, both founders of the Congress Socialist Party, were already close to Gandhiji when they first met Nehru; they in fact were acquainted well with Gandhiji's thinking and were curious about Nehru's ideas.) When the Congress working committee met on the eve of the Lucknow session and adopted a number of resolutions sponsored by Nehru which, as he wrote, "increased my confidence in my capacity to keep the various groups in the Congress together." But, "the proceedings of the Congress weakened this impression, and I realised some of the difficulties in store for me. The Congress rejected some of my important recommendations and gave its full support to the old leadership. I stood in a minority in the Congress, and doubts assailed me as to whether I should continue as president. The formation of the working committee distressed me all the more, as it emphasised the limitations within

which I had to function." Despite his "mental conflict," Nehru undertook some tours and visited among other places Bombay and returned enthused, "everywhere I spoke about the Congress programme as decided at Lucknow and emphasised the need for strenthening the organisation. In the course of my speeches I laid stress on poverty and unemployment in India, and said that a true solution could come only through socialism, but there could be no socialism without independence and all of us had therefore to concentrate on the latter." The Congress programme about which he talked was the Lucknow resolution denouncing the 1935 Act as an imposition, to the accompaniment of widespread repression and supression of civil liberties. The resolution also called for a constituent assembly on the basis of the right of selfdetermination and agrarian reforms. Nehru wrote that wherever he went "I met with enthusiastic and overwhelming response," but when later in the year the working committee met, "to my surprise and dismay I found that some of my colleagues did not share the enthusiasm and were full of apprehension. They offered their resignations from the working committee. I was stunned...owing to the intervention of Gandhiji the resignations were withdrawn, but I returned in a desperate frame of mind.

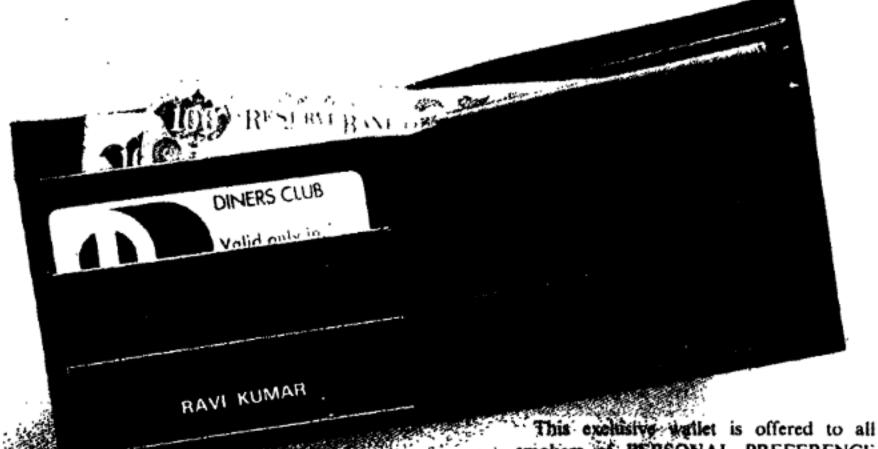
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Felt that I should resign and place the whole matter before the AICC"-which, however, he did not do as a result of Gandhiji's persua-

Jawaharlal could not think of why his old friends in the working committee reacted the way they did. He wrote that "the dominating reason at the time was, I think, a feeling that my speeches might scare away the voters and thus affect adversely the general elections that were coming, (but) later it was realised that I was a fairly efficient election winner." To find the real reason for the behaviour of his critics in the Congress leadership, one has to examine the role of GD who, in fact, can be described as the master-mind behind the whole operation aimed at either taming Nehru or making him ineffective. Nehru's speeches in Bombay had raised the wrath of local industrialists. In the 1920s they were campaigning against the government's economic policies, but they had made a volte face during the 1930 and 1932 civil disobedience movements and had come out in support of the government's repressive policies because of the impact of the great depression, the strike wave of the last years of the previous decade and the boycott and hartals of the Congress. The spectre of communism also haunted them and Nehru's speeches were a red rag to them. Twenty-one of them issued what was described as the Bombay manifesto against Nehru and his Congress.

Writing to one of the signatories, Walchand Hirachand, GD complained, "You have rendered no service to your castemen. It is curious how we businessmen are so shortsighted. It looks very crude for a man with property to say that he is opposed to expropriation in the wider interests of the country." He added that, in fact, "your manifesto has done positive harm to the capitalist system." In a letter to PT, he wrote that "the manifesto has given impetus to the forces working against capitalism." He posed the question: "Are you or myself a fit person to talk" in defence of property? And he urged, "Let those who have given up property say what you want to say" and that the capitalists should "strengthen" their handsthe hands of "people like Vallabhbhai (Patel) and Bhulabhai (Desai) who are fighting against socialism." Although GD mentioned only two names, the use of the term "people like" meant that he had others in mind, for, in another letter he recalled that at the Lucknow session," Rajendra Babu spoke very strongly and some people attacked Jawaharlal's ideology openly " Probably he had Gandhiji also in mind.

Firstly, Gandhiji himself had written to Agatha Harrison that Nehru's working committee had "a majority of those who represent the tradition-

al view...my view." The main issue for Birla was not the denunciation of the 1935 Act or the agrarian reforms---even Gandhiji said in his Agatha Harrison letter that "I would like to kill the new constitution (the 1935 Act) today if I can...(and) I accept his (Nehru's) ideal about land etc." The real issue was whether the Congress would opt for confrontation on the question of the 1935 Act which the Indian industry did not want, or would work it as urged by Birla and other spokesmen of the Indian industry's interests. On this point Gandhiji was clear, as he put it in the same letter, "Jawaharlal's way is not my way. I would strain every nerve to prevent class war. So would he, I expect. But he does not believe it to be possible to avoid it. I believe it to be perfectly possible if my method were accepted. But so far as I know him he would not precipitate a crisis. But there perhaps the whole Congress is not of one mind."

This lent significance to the fact that those whom Birla described as the Mahatma's men were in the majority in the Congress working committee and, as Nehru pointed out in his *National Herald* articles, the constitution of the committee brought home to him his limitations, and the threat of resignation by Vallabhbhai, Rajendra Babu, Rajaji, Jairamdas Daulatram, Jamnalal Bajaj, Shankerrao Dev and Kripalani left him in no doubt about his position. Although the three socialist members of the working committee (JP, Narendra Deva and Achyut Patwardhan) stood by him in that crisis, it is not certain what would have been the attitude of some of them in the event of a showdown—Birla had influence among them (reference has aiready been made to his relations with JP) and some of them later "reconsidered"—Masanı's wordtheir "socialism."

Secondly, even at Lucknow, as

Birla wrote in one of his letters to his Bombay "castemen", "Jawaharlal's speech (presidential address) in a way was thrown in the waste paper basket because all the resolutions that were passed were against the spirit of that speech." Two of Nehru's proposals were rejected, one sought collective affiliation to the Congress of workers and peasants and other mass organisations. The other was more important from the point of view of Birla and his friends--non-acceptance of offices under the 1935 Act. This rejection was interpreted as keeping the door open over which Birla was very happy, and ultimately the Congress, after the general election, did opt for acceptance of offices which is what Birla had wanted. How did this happen when not only had the Congress adopted the election manifesto drafted by Nehru and acclaimed by

Narendra Deva as a "revolutionary,

not a reformist" document, but

Nehru had been allowed to run the Congress election campaign throughout the country in his own way and with his own slogans? Nehru was assigned the job of getting votes which he did, but the candidates were selected by Patel and Rajendra Prasad along with Abul Kalam Azad. The responsibility for providing guidance and leadership to the newly constituted Congress legislature parties was entrusted to the "high command" consisting of the three, and the leaders of the legislature parties were the nominees of the high command. Birla in his letters took note of the dominance of Patel and Rajendra Prasad and gloated over it.

After office acceptance(which was preceded by negotiations with Birla playing the conciliator), the road was laid which ultimately led to the transfer of power in 1947, although in between there were many ups and downs, many hurdles had to be crossed, and World War II created new problems. But that is a different story. As far as Jawaharlal Nehru was concerned, he was no more a problem from the point of view of Birla and his friends. Mahadev Desai assured Birla, "The difficulty with Jawaharlal, all said and done, is not insurmountable, so it seems at any rate. He frets and fumes, he storms, he is often in rage, but after all he is a sport, and so quickly regains his balance, makes rapid amends and sees that there is no unpleasantness left behind" Birla too had drawn a similar conclusion from Nehru's refusal to fight the right wing in the Congress. He wrote to his Bombay friends, "Jawaharlalji seems to be a typical English democrat who takes defeat in a sporting spirit. He seems to be cut for giving expression to his ideology but he realises that action is impossible and so does not press for it.'

After office acceptance, one of GD's closent allies was the Prime Minister (as heads of provincial governments were then called) in Madras, the Bombay government functioned directly under the guidance of Patel, and in UP he had Pantji. In Bihar Rajendra Babu had the last word. This is how the Congress was manipulated to subserve the interests of the growing Indian industry which, however, made money, white and black, during the war while the Congress was engaged in a "do or die" struggle against imperialism.

These friends of GD in the Congress proved useful after Independence, even after Patel, Rajendra Babu and Pant ji had passed away. Today GD's sons have access to the highest in the country and exercise greater influence on decisionmaking than anyone else, whatever the professed policy of the government thanks to the class-conscious approach of GD towards the national movement from 1920 onwards.

Wanted: A new Keynes to save capitalism

After Karl Marx, it was John Maynaid Keynes who shaped the economies of most of the countries of the world in the twentieth century. Keynes belongs to the genre of Adam Smith and Ricardo. Keynes was born 100 years ago this month.

fter World War II, capitalism never had it so good till about ten years ago. Before the great war, there were periodic and recurrent recessions in the capitalist countries. The depression seen in the early Thuties was unimaginable. It was as if Marx was about to be proved right and capitalism would collapse under its own weight. But, no, it did not happen. By that time Keynes had arrived. In his classic General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, Keynes challenged the classical capitalist theory that the cyclical depressions were a fact of life and the economies would recover on their own. He advocated that in conditions of high unemployment and low economic activities, pumppriming (injecting money into the economy) or public deficits would be inflationary. Keynes' theories were, however, applied on a worldwide scale (excluding of course, socialist countries) after the war He also fathered the Bretton Woods international monetary system and the developmental aid agency, the World Bank. For nearly three decades, the advanced capitalist world experienced virtually uninterrupted growth with near fullemployment and experienced only mild and brief recessions

But things have changed in the last 10 years. Unemployment in the developed capitalist countries has reached the staggering figure of 32 million and it is still growing. The combined GNP is stagnating. The rate of inflation is still higher than it was during the period of high and relatively sustained growth. Keynes had known only deep recession. His General Theory did not foresee inflation, till at least near full-employment was achieved. Capitalism, in short, had so far known either recession or inflation. For recession, the Keynesian prescription was pump-priming and for inflation it was the reverse, i.e. cutting down public expenditure. But what capitalism is now experiencing is neither recession alone nor inflation alone but stagflation, i.e. recession combined with



By KEWAL VARMA

inflation. With the Keynesian prescription, if the rigours of recession are sought to be reduced, then inflation tends to get aggravated and if inflation is sought to be controlled then recession tends to deepen. The modifications of the Keynesian prescription, the monetarist formulas, so much in fashion these days and applied with variations in most of the capitalist countries have led to the worst economic disasters in recent years. The trouble with capitalism started when the Americans started financing the war against Vietnam not with additional taxation and by cutting down investment and consumption levels but through trade deficits. They covered these huge trade deficits by printing more and more dollar currency notes which had acquired worldwide acceptability. Incidentally, the second world war was financed by cutting down consumption levels. You cannot have gun and butter together for too long. Unfortunately, for the advanced capitalist world the timing of the lagged effect of the gun and butter policy coincided with the emergence of oil cartelisation and quadrupling of petroleum prices in one stroke. Since then the petroleum prices rose continuously till early this year. The successful oil cartelisation has resulted in the deterioration in the aggregate terms of trade of the advanced capitalist countries. Simultaneously, even after the end of the Vietnam war, there is no let-up in the defence expenditure. Last year, the total US defence expenditure reached the staggering figure of Rs 650,000 crores. This is equal to six times the expenditure of India's public sector outlay in the sixth plan. The Williamsburg economic summit of the seven most advanced capitalist countries last month has given a further signal of another

spurt of excessively costly nuclear arms race. This expenditure is being financed without sacrificing "butter."

Another new development which Keynes did not foresee was the growth of political muscles by the working class. Using these muscles, the working class has been successfully imitating the consumption model of the upper classes through wage rise and welfare and social security programmes. This has given rise to a consumer society. As a result there is a structural imbalance between the rate of consumption and the rate of accumulation of reproducing capital. This holds good for the main dynamic centre of capitalism, namely, the United States. According to the great Latin American economist Raul Prebisch, just as the epicentre of the great depression was the United States. the epicentre of the current crisis of world capitalism is also in the same country. It is true that both President Reagan and Mrs Margaret Thatcher have temporarily succeeded in taming the political power of the labour force, but to quote Raul Prebisch again: "If at some time the economy revives, can the trade union and political power of labour be bypassed once more or will there be another inflationary cycle resulting from the imbalance between consumption and accumulation? That is the big question. In my opinion, the problem is insoluble from this stand point."

World capitalism is thus caught in an economic stalemate. It is not prepared to cut down defence expenditure, neither is it prepared to cut down the consumption of the upper classes. Even if the consumption levels of the working classes are brought down temporarily. labour will reclaim the lost ground as soon as there is some economic recovery by using its political power as well as its power of holding the economy to ransom. In short, capitalism is not politically ready to bid goodbye to the gun and butter policy. In this situation the only way world capitalism can resolve its internal stalemate can be throughea number of instruments: like manipulating exchange rates. interest rates and terms of trade. The most effective instrument is, of course, terms of trade which for example have successfully brought about a split in the OPEC. As a result there may now be a gradual decline in the real relative prices of crude.



AO Il on the table

A SPECIAL SURVEY

The World of Microchips

Microchip: The miracle of the 20th century

By Dr Ranjan Roy



Barely the size of a tamarind leaf, and almost as light, the chip has ushered in a revolution in technology today. Although most of us in India have felt its impact only through

cheap digital wristwatches and pocket-calculators, the consequences of this ongoing revolution have already started affecting most facets of life in the developed countries. To put it simply, the chip is a lot of complicated electronic circuitry put on a piece of silicon, paper thin and barely quarter-of-an-inch to a side. Almost betraying the incredibly complex technology behind it, techniques of mass-production have made it extremely cheap, the ones as complicated as computers often costing less than pocket radios.

The chip would be remarkable enough if it were only compact, low cost electronics, but it can also embody memory and logic, giving it a versatility and flexibility suitable for almost limitless applications—second only to the human brain. The microprocessor—a computer on a chip—for example, is used today

from running fuel-stingy automobiles, to making robots that automate assembly lines, to personal computers used in homes, schools and small businesses in the West.

The biggest impact of chips has been in computer technology. To give you an idea, compare a typical microprocessor with the first electronic digital computer ENIAC, built in America in 1946. Today's computer holds several hundred thousand electronic components, ten times the 30-ton ENIAC; performs a million calculations per second, 200 times faster than ENIAC; consumes a millionth of power compared to ENIAC's megawatts; and finally, costs 30 thousand times less!

How has this little marvel come about? How does it work? Let us trace the story of the mighty microchip from the beginning.

The chip is born

Electronics, as we all know, has to do with electric current—flow of electric charges, or of their smallest unit, electrons. Some basic components of electronic circuits are, therefore, capacitors, which store charge; resistors, which impede their flow; transistors, which can amplify currents, or can act as controllable switches, letting the current flow or not flow under the control of a signal.

In the early days of electronics, say the Thirties, to put together an electronic device, say a radio, you would drill appropriate holes on a metal chassis to place the various components—capacitors, resistors, vacuum tubes, etc., and then solder connecting wires to put the whole circuit together. The process was slow, laborious, and susceptible to loose contacts, human errors, and so on.

Enter the transistor. Compared to a vacuum tube, it consumes much less power, is faster, and fails less often. Besides, replacing the pearsize tubes by pea-size transistors allows you to make the device more compact. But that would also make it difficult to wire! To overcome this difficulty, the printed circuit board was introduced, where wires are replaced by metallic conduction paths embossed on plastic boards, according to the circuit layout. The components could then be inserted into holes made at appropriate places, and their leads neatly soldered to the metallic tracks. But even this is a slow process, and then the components would often be soldered poorly, break off circuit boards and so on. The big leap came in 1959, when two American engineers, Jack Kilby and Robert Novce, thought of a better way, independently: why not make the silicon crystal of the transistor serve as its own circuit board!

The silicon revolution was on.

The making of a chip

The electrical properties of silicon can be controlled by doping its crystals with (that is mixing small, measured amounts of impurites like) arsenic or boron. When doped with arsenic, the silicon crystal gets an excess of electrons, which can readily carry current-it is called n-type material (n for negatively charged electrons). Silicon doped with boron has a deficit of electrons, which behave like positively charged particles, called holes. To picture that, think of a bubble in a bottle of water. When the bottle is turned upside down, the bubble seems to move up. though it is really the water that

A magnified view of an ant carrying a microchip



moves down. Silicon doped with boron is called p-type material (p for

positive holes).

The basic electronic components can all be formed from combinations of p-type and n-type regions next to each other. Sometimes a thin layer of silicon dioxide formed on top is also used. For example, a transistor is formed when a p-type region is sandwiched between two n-type regions (npn), or the other way round (pnp). When the two sides are connected to suitable voltages, the voltage of the middle layer can control the flow of current. This takes place very fast, since electrons and holes in solids move with a speed nearing a tenth of the speed of light through regions extending only about a thousandth part of an inch.

Without going into details, figure 2 shows one of the many ways of putting some of the basic components together. In essence, it looks something like a cake-with layers or regions of chocolate, cream etc. (corresponding to say, n- and p- type materials), laid on a basic substrate of dough. The icing or the writing could be thought of as the conducting metallic tracks. Viewed under a microscope, a chip looks a lot more complicated (see fig. 5)—somewhat like the buildings and roads of a metropolis viewed from above!

But how is a "cake" like that

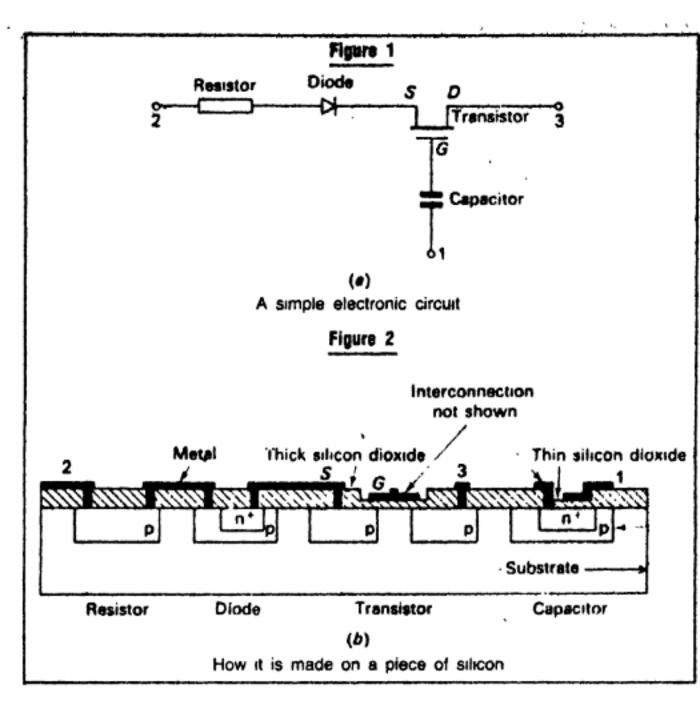
made?

The basic ingredient silicon, found in sand, is the most abundant element on earth after oxygen. Highly purified silicon is molten, and long crystals in the shape of round bars are slowly drawn out of the melt. Impurities in small, measured amounts may be added as necessary to make p- or n-type crystals. The bar is then cut into paper-thin slices (called "wafers") with a diamond tipped saw-much like cutting sausage. The wafers are then polished flat.

It is these wafers on which chips are made—each an exact replica of a pre-calculated design that is now embossed on it. The process, called photo lithography, as we shall now see, is not much unlike batik

printing.

By heating in a stream of steam or oxygen, the wafer is coated with a thin insulating layer of silicon dioxide. The surface is now covered with a light-sensitive plastic called photoresist (fig. 3). The photoresist is then exposed to ultra-violet light through a stencil (called "mask") containing the design (fig. 3). The exposed photoresist then hardens into the proper outline. Acids and solvents dissolve away unexposed photoresist and oxide, bearing the patterned silicon (fig. 3). The dopants can now be introduced into the base silicon by heating the wafer in a hot inert gas containing the required proportion of impurities. The oxide layer absorbs the impurities, hence the parts covered with oxide remain in-



tact (fig. 3).

Fresh layers of silicon may then be laid down, if necessary, and the process repeated, building in this way from 10 to 20 different layers, all etched according to their respective patterns, leaving "windows" for inter-connections. At the last step, an evaporated metal, often aluminium, is condensed onto the wafer, filling the gaps, to form the conducting pathways.

Each little chip is then diced from the wafer, and bonded with thin gold strips to make the external connections. It is then sealed in a thin flat plastic box to avoid dirt and moisture, which completely foul up the operation of a chip. For the same reason, the entire manufacture is done in the most fastidiously clean

environment.

rery year, for more than two Lidecades now, engineers have roughly doubled the number of components on a chip, mainly by shrinking them. This makes circuit design, layout and maskmaking incredibly complicated. Only the best computers (built from the most advanced chips) can perform the billions of calculations needed—a process called Computer Aided Design (CAD). This process of integration—packing more and more chips on a single silicon flake—is what gives the chip its technical name: Monolithic Integrated Circuits (ICs). Some tens of transistors on one chip is called small-scale integration (SSI), some hundreds is medium scale (MSI).

whereas large scale is some thousands of them on one chip. The latest is VLSI (v. for very), where several hundred thousands crowd onto one chip. To give you an idea, SSI and MSI chips have fairly modest. functional capabilities. A digital watch requires some 5,000 on a chip, a pocket calculator some 10,000. About 1000,000—the upper fringes of a LSI would be enough to make a good microprocessor.

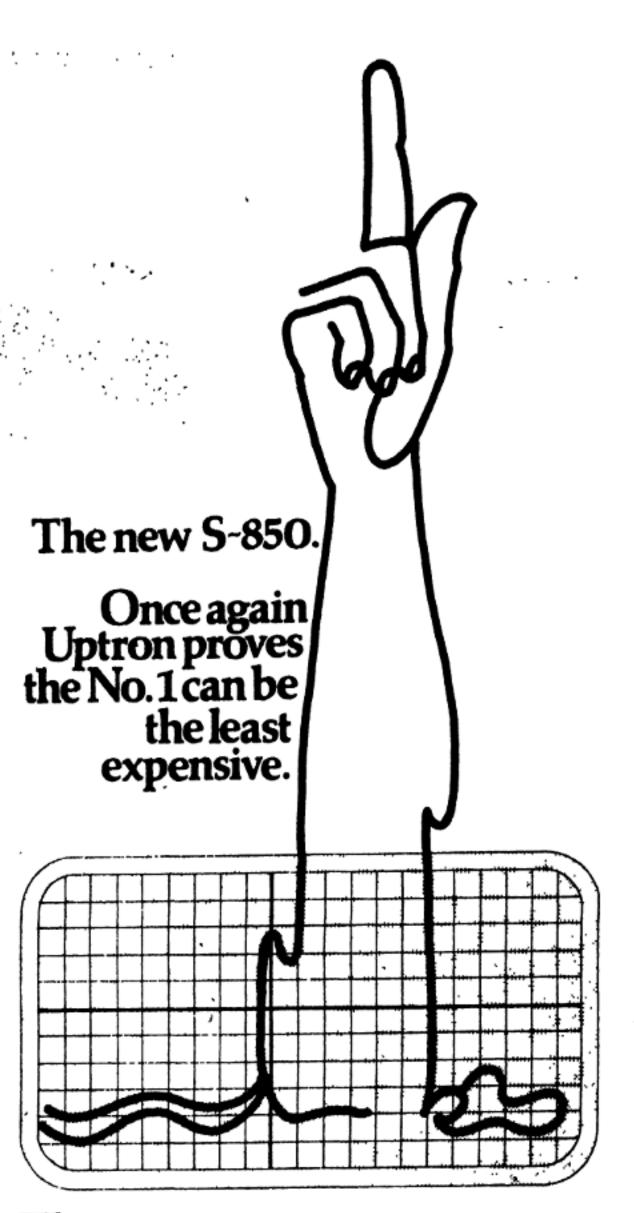
India, at present, manufactures only SSI and MSI chips—at Bharat Electronics Limited, Bangalore. The Semiconductor Complex, a public sector corporation, is now being set up with American collaboration at Chandigarh to manufacture LSI chips. USA and Japan are world leaders in the IC technology-many other developed and a few developing countries also have their own

plants.

Think digital

In our usual, everyday counting, we use the decimal system, where ten symbols 0,1,2, up to 9 are used to represent numbers. To count something bigger, say 18, we would put a 1 in 10's place, which would then stand for 10, and put an 8 next to it. giving 10818. If we wanted to count 32 instead, we would write it as 32—"three tens and two."

There is nothing special about using ten symbols, however. We could do the same counting by using only two symbols: 0 and 1. Since we do not have a separate symbol for two in



The new



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waste money on 3 specialised singlepurpose printers.

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this system, we would put a 1 in 2's place and a 0 10 standing "one two and naught." Similarly, five would be 101-"one four, no two and one," eighteen would be 10010, and so on. Incidentally, if that sounds like New Maths taught in class VII, you are right-that's what 1t 15'

This system of counting is called the binary system. It would be foolish to use it in everyday life ("Give me a 1011010 paise ticket, please!"), because the number of digits needed to express most numbers of everyday use would be too large. But it makes

a lot of sense in electronics, because a 0 and a 1 can be represented by "off" and "on" of a switch. Thus the four possible off/on positions of two switches could count from zero up to three. Ten switches could count up to 1,023. Note that multiplying ten 2's together we get 1,024-a number that is called 1k in technical parl-

Each 0 or 1. by the way, is called a bit, an acronym for binary digit. Ten bits, that is a string of ten 0s or 1s is therefore equivalent to 1k (or 1,024-roughly a thousand) The usual arithmetic operations of

adding, subtracting, multiplying etc. work out similar to the way they work in the decimal system (try it). And all that is called binary arithmetic.

round 1850, George Book, an **A**English mathematician, made a remarkable discovery. He showed that logical operations (like "if," "and," "or," etc.) could be denoted by algebraic symbols, and logic can then be treated as a branch of mathematics. This idea, however, did not have much currency or popularity among electronics engineers,

India's electronics city



About 20 kms south of Bangalore city on the way to Hosur is a mini industrial township. No smoke belches out of the factory sheds and neither is there the mévitable hooter signalling the factory

hours. Instead one hears the steady hum of women's voices from a short distance. Closer, one hears the ping, zap and wow of electronic measuring instruments. This is the Electronics City of India. Estimated to cost around Rs 365 lakhs and expected to be completed by the next year, the city is the brainchild of Mr R. K. Baliga, the chairmancum-managing director of the Karnataka State Electronics Development Corporation (Keonics).

India's electronics city has over 410 acres of land and already a

number of plots have been sold to small and large entrepreneurs, among whom are Tata Electric and Indian Telephone Industries. Said Mr R. K. Baliga, "Keonics' main objective is to plan, organise and promote the rapid growth of electromes in Karnataka. It has been our constant endeavour to assist entrepreneurs right from the state of processing of the project report to the final stage of implementation of the project and continuous growth thereafter." This may sound ambitious but given the basic needs of an electronics industry—a fine climate and skilled labour-Bangalore is admirably suited. Nearly Rs 330 crores or a third of the country's entire production of electronics goods amounting to Rs 980 crores is concentrated in Karnataka. To top this, around 90 per cent of the country's total professional

equipment is made in this state. Our aim is to create around

10,000 jobs in the electronics industry in the state," explained Mr Baliga. "You see, we do not have an industrial culture like Japan or the USA. Whatever strides we have made is from 1956 onwards, when India started industrialisation " Established in 1976, Keonics has already invested Rs four crores and helped about 300 units through its various divisions: the design and engineering centre, the material centre and the manufacturing divi-

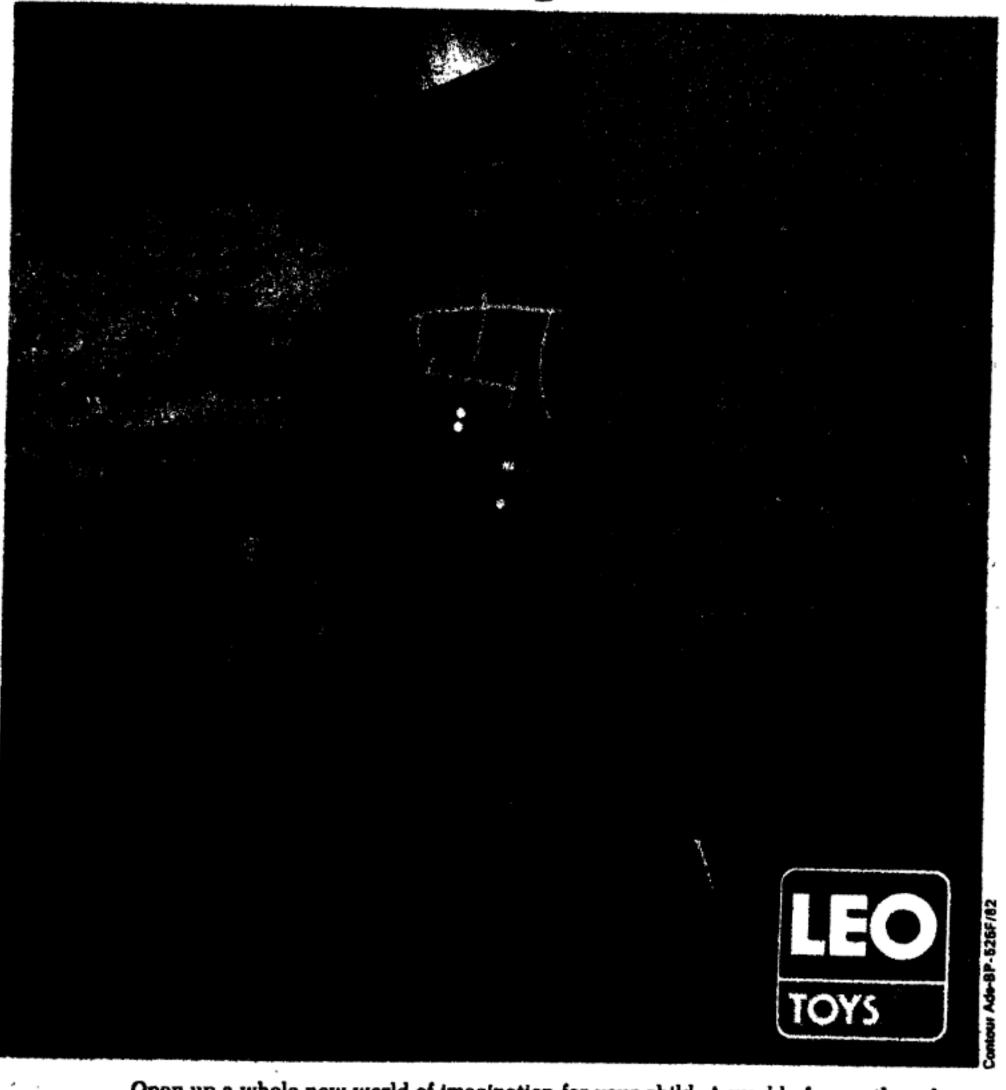
Speaking of the future, Mr Baliga said: "I have a dream of establishing mini electronics cities in other parts of Karnataka, like Mysore. But that will take a few more years to come about. In the meanwhile, Keonics on its own has started manufacturing some electronics goods. "With that he took out a Keonics-manufactured dialling unit for teleprinters. Opening the cover of the dialling unit, Mr Baliga pointed out the different parts within. "Earlier," he said, "most of the implements which went into the manufacture of these dialling units were made outside the state. Today, all the units are manufactured by Keonicssponsored small scale electronics manufacturers in or near Bangalore." With only 63 employees on its rolls, Keonics has a number of projects under implementation. There are plans to produce 20,000 black-and-white TV sets, high voltage resistors, two-way communication equipment, 2,00,000 telephone instruments and two million professional grade connectors. Recently, Keonics technicians set up a totally indigenous ground control unit for Hindustan Aeronautics Limited at Bangalore airport: an achievement of no mean stature when most such units are manufactured by giants like Bharat Electronics Limited.

Tirthankar Ghosh

Production figures and targets of electronics goods in India and Karnataka

| (Hs in millions) | | | | | | |
|--|---------|------|---------|-----|---------|------|
| | 1980-81 | | 1981-82 | | 1983-84 | |
| | India | Kar | India | Kar | India | Kar |
| Consumer electronics (includes mass com- munication equip- ment) | 2140 | 136 | 2460 | 185 | 3685 | 525 |
| Telecommunication, radar, aerospace and defence | 2485 | 1890 | 2230 | 166 | 4040 | 3235 |
| Computers | | | | | 620 | 75 |
| Control and industrial electronics, medical electronics, test and measuring instruments, analytical and special applications | 1600 | 380 | 1885 | 580 | 2680 | 490 |
| Components | 1630 | 440 | 1730 | 460 | 3100 | 620 |
| Source: KEONICS | | | | | | |

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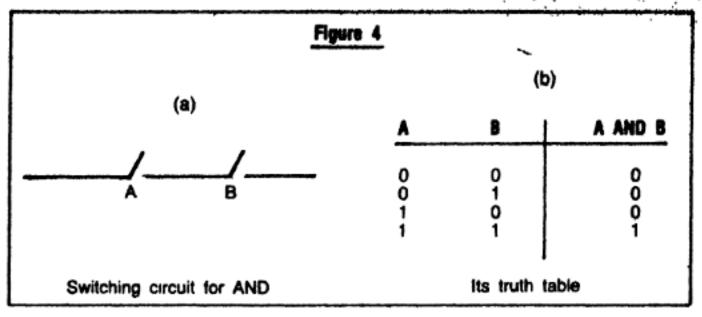


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until around 1940, when a brilliant young American mathematician, Claude Shannon, showed how simple electrical switching circuits could be designed to represent these logical operations. Take for example two switches in series (fig. 4a): a current will flow if both A and B are closed. If an open switch is denoted by a 0, and a closed switch by 1, then the result of the four off/on combinations of the two switches is shown in the third column of the chart (fig. 4b) — a 0 for no current flowing, and 1 for current flowing.

Similar charts, called "truth tables," can be constructed for all other logical operations, and the corresponding combination of switches can be devised. Shannon also constructed the circuits to add, subtract, multiply, and so on. In doing so, he showed that the mathematics used for specifying these circuits is effectively identical to the mathematics

of symbolic logic.

Rather than using mechanical switches, it obviously makes sense to use transistors, which can be switched on or off very fast and require far less power to operate. ICs containing such circuitry require only SSI. They are manufactured in billions, and are cheaply and readily available off the shelf.

Electronics that works on the principle of binary arithmetic and logic is called digital electronics. If we use, say, +6 volts to represent 1 and 0 volt to stand for 0, in a digital system +6 volts plus +6 volts gives 0 volt (remember, 1+1=0 with carry 1 in binary). As opposed to this, analog electronics (the kind of circuits used in your radio) is where +6 volts plus +6 volts would be +12 volts. To summarise, digital works with discrete quantities like 0 or 1 (black or white---with no shades of grey allowed), whereas analog works with continuous quantities.

Digital circuits have certain advantages over analog,—for example, tolerance to small diviations or errors (+5.8 volts would still be recognised as 1 by the circuit). In computer circuits, where innumerable repetitive operations are undertaken, the advantage is obvious—small deviations do not pile up. For this, and a few other more technical reasons, an overwhelmingly large

number of the available chips are digital. But analog chips are also manufactured and used (mainly in consumer electronics).

Chips as building blocks

Nobody, other than the designer of the chip, ever worries about the exact circuitry contained on it. To an electronics engineer, a chip is a black box, characterised by its functional description—what kind of signals will it put out when certain input signals are given. Some of the commonest logic and arithmetical functions have been talked about earlier. Look at some more, which are a bit more complex—in fact, MSI chips.

One would be a "clock chip." Its function is to give a regular pulse train—alternate 0s and 1s—like a "beep beep." It serves as a reference setting the pace for other chips to change their states (say from 0 to 1) sequentially. A "flip flop" is a functional unit that can exist in either of two states (say 0 or 1)—staying put in its state until signalled to change. It is a basic element for storing a single bit. If many such bits are stored, one also needs to know what is stored where. Say we have 16 "flip flops,"

numbered 0 to 15, storing the bits. Let us say we want the bit in the 11th. In binary, its address is not 10, but 1010. A chip that sends the signal to the intended location from its (binary) address, like your postman, is called an address "decoder."

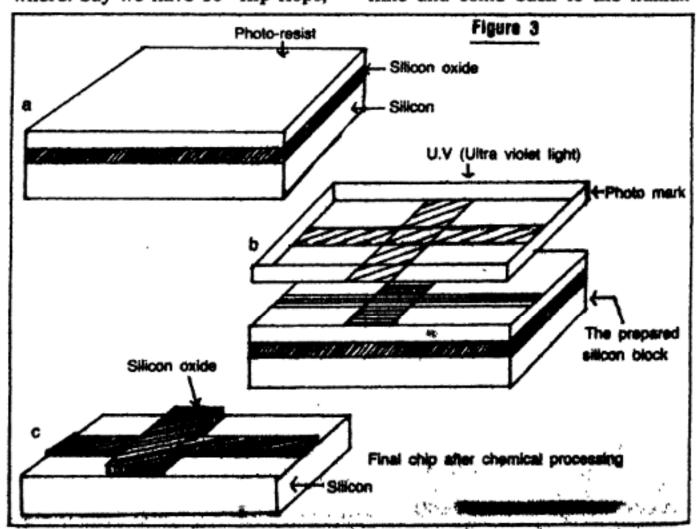
Next we come to LSI chips, and take up "memory" chips first. In concept, they are just a matrix of flip flops, each storing a bit of information, plus the decoder circuits to locate a particular flip flop. When we can read a bit that is already there (without affecting it), or change it, both within a very short time (only one ten-millionth of a second), it is called read-write memory or RAM. Read-only memories (ROMs), on the other hand cannot be altered so easily. The contrast is that between a cassette tape and a gramophone disc: Some ROMs, however, can be erased by ultra-violet light, and the bit pattern in them rewritten. They are called EPROMs (Erasable Programmeable ROMs).

Any information that can be represented by a string of 0s and 1s can be put in ROMs or RAMs. For example, letters of the alphabet—when we

make a code.

The microprocessor

The most powerful LSI chip is the microprocessor: a computer on a chip. Its difference from other chips is that it holds a "programme" in its memory. Any complicated routine operation from running a car to working out a sum that a computer does can be broken down to a sequence of simple logical operations on the bits to be processed. Since modern electronic circuits perform their operations at a tremendous speed (usually in about a millionth of a second), it is a great wastage of their capability if they do one step at a time and come back to the human



what to do next. Such a series of instructions is called a programme. Hungarian born mathematical genius John Von Neumann got the brilliant idea, in 1941, of storing the programmes within the computer itself.

This allows the computer to go down the steps of its programme at its own tremendous speed, allowing it to decide when to change course, and to do so. Furthermore, it allows programmes within the memory to effectively interlock and interact. Programmes call up other programmes, switching back and forth as

required.

The EPROM (area 1 in fig. 5) on a microprocessor contains the programme of instructions to perform a given task. Its RAM (area 2) holds interim operational data during processing. Each memory section has its own address decoder (3 and 4). The instruction units (5) interprets the bit codes read from the EPROM, and breaks it down to extremely detailed elementary logical steps for execution by the arithmetic-logic unit or ALU.

The interrupt unit (7) allows—within a few millionth of a second—signals of higher priority to usurp control and steer the processor into a different programme. The off-chip addressing units routes communication with outside sensors, display units and other chips. The wires sticking out serves to make the external connections (to the power supply, and signals to be put in or put out). The entire system runs to the beat of a clock, also contained on the chip.

Well, there you have it—once you decide on the steps of the process and how to go about them, write it up as a programme and put it into the PROM, it is ready to go to work for you. And what a work horse! If man



ONGC computer centre in Dehradun: aiding India's progress.

has ever known a genie that came out of the bottle ready to serve you—this is it!

Where will it all end?

The myriads of applications of the chip has already affected the lifestyle of humans profoundly, at least in the developed countries. In the foreseeable future, more and more such technological breakthrough will be catalysed by the chip, eventually touching all the facets of our life.

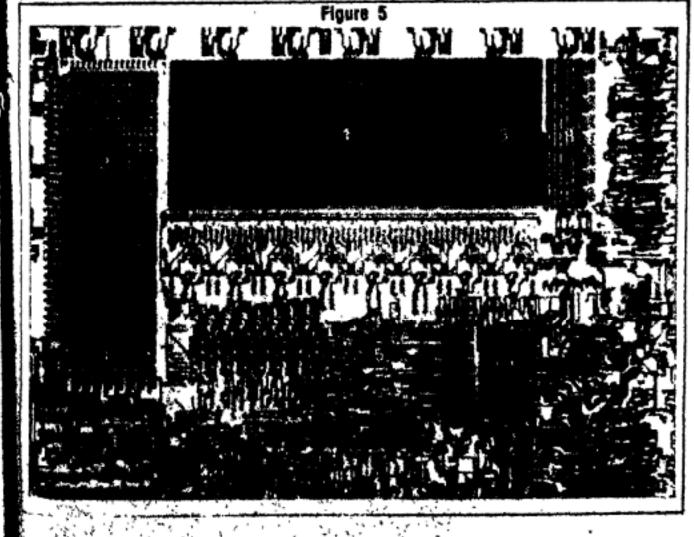
Exactly who benefits by such breakthrough and how much, however, will continue to be decided by the economic and political structure of our societies at national and international levels.

At a more abstract level, a more far-reaching question arises. With the fantastic advances already achieved, in a little over two decades, in terms of the improvement in speed and reduction in power consumption, size and cost of chips, where will it all end?

Consider the fact that the human brain is also made up of minute binary switching units-called neurones, and there are an awful lot of them—roughly a billion (100 crores) in all. Neurones, however, switch at a measly 100 times a second compared to the chip's 100 million times a second. Would the electronic brain then beat the human brain soon? The answer is no! Although miles ahead in numerical applications, the chip as we know it today, is totally incapable when it comes to some very human functions: intuition, creativity, wisdom, emotion....It may be possible, in principle to programme some of these functions, we just do not know enough about ourselves to figure out a way to do so. Meanwhile the biggest challenge to ourselves is to keep mechanised, materialistc society.

ahead of the chip by not letting our human qualities become extinct in a mechanised, materialistc society.

Dr Ranjan Roy is a professor of physics at St Xavier's College; Calcutta 37



How come every computer user



looks at CMC in a different light

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The chip: An extraordinary marvel

By Samarjit Kar



During his visit to Calcutta a iew years ago, I remember. Nobel Laureate Professor Felix Bloch made an excellent remark. We were discussing modern discoveries in science

and technology. "You know, nature has countless tricks. Know them and manipulate," he told me. "You can be a great discoverer," he said. The development of electronics, in the true sense, can be said to be manipulation of an extraordinary kind: both intellectual and technological. Today, achievements in the front lines of science and technology depend much on microelectronics. These are the small and reliable sensing and control devices which have landed men on the moon and helped the exploration in outer space. Present-day aviation, product control, data processing and calculation, information storage, processing and displays, operation of power plants depend very much on electronics. In fact, electronics has helped us to understand the mysteries of the

cosmos and the basic chemistry of life. Without electronics, modern science and technology cannot progress. All this has been possible with the development of integrated circuits (ICs) on single substrates, which we know as 'chips.' The story of the chip began with the development 35 years ago of the transistora small low power amplifier and the basic functional element of a modern electronic circuit—that replaced the large power-hungry vacuum tube in the old radio sets. Chips are the products of profound human ing-enuity which has no parallel.

An electronic device is principally made up of "active" circuit elements, such as transistors, in combination with passive components, such as resistors, capacitors and inductors. These are the materials which carry an electric current. For instance, the electrical resistance of a metal is said to be the disruption of the orderly movement of electrons by interaction with the atomic struc ture of the material. So, a conductor acts as a resistor. Capacitance is a measure of electric field surrounding a conductor. So a conductor can

act as a capacitor. Inductance represents the energy stored in the magnetic field set up by an electric current; since current passes through a conductor, so it can act as an inductor. The universal practice once was to manufacture each of the components separately and then assemble them with metallic conductors to make a device. Microelectronics is also made up of similar components. But in their case, the major difference is that all these components and interconnections are fabricated on a single substrate in a single series of operations. Here comes the uncovering of a trick of nature.

We know, in regard to electrical conductivity, materials are broadly divided into two classes: conductors and insulators. In a conductor, such as a metal, electrical current is carried by electrons. These electrons are free to wander within the structure of the conductors. In insulators, electrons are tightly bound to atoms or molecules and are thus not free to carry electric charges. However, there is another kind of material which lies in between these two classes, called "semiconductors." In these substances carriers which can carry any type of charges are not usually present, but they can be generated with a modest expenditure of energy. For this, silicon has a great role to play.

The atom of a silicon particle has four electrons in its valence or outermost shell of electrons. When the silicon is in a solid crystalline state, pairs of these electrons, shared by neighbouring atoms, are arranged symmetrically so that each atom is shared by eight electrons. Since all the electrons are bonded between atoms, a crystal of pure silicon is a poor conductor of electricity. However, the situation can be changed if a controlled number of impure atoms are introduced to it. This is called doping. The silicon can then act as a semiconductor. For example, part of a silicon crystal can be doped with phosphorous, whose atoms have five electrons in their valence shells. An atom of phosphorous can displace a silicon atom without disrupting the crystal of the silicon as a whole, but the extra electron it brings has no place in interatomic bonds. This extra electron remains in the vicinity

A talking computer which analyses the word morphology being developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology



of the impure atom, and it can be put to motion if a small voltage is ap-

plied to the crystal.

Silicon can also be doped with boron. An atom of boron has three valence electrons. When a boron atom is put within a silicon crystal, it creates deficiency of one electron, a state that is called a "hole." The hole also remains attached to the vicinity of the impure atom. When a voltage is applied, it becomes mobile. However, it is not a particle like an electron, rather it is like a bubble, having positive electric charges and carrying an electric current. Silicon doped with phosphorous or any pentavalent element is called a *n*-type semiconductor, n being the negative electric charge of the conduction current. Doping with boron or any trivalent element gives rise to a p-type semiconductor,p represents the positive electric charge of the holes.

diode is the simplest semicon-Aductor device. It is made up of a single silicon crystal having two adjacent regions. One of its regions is the n-type and the other is the p-type. When positive voltage is applied to the p-type region and negative voltage to the n-type region, counter currents of electrons and holes are established. The holes of the p-type region are repelled by the positive charge applied to the pterminal and attracted to the negative terminal, so that they flow across the junction. Similarly electrons are repelled by negative voltage and are propelled towards the positive terminal. As a result a large current is set in, called forward cur-

Once the diode connections are reversed the holes will be pulled back towards the terminal of the p-type region, which has now a negative charge and the electrons will be drawn back into the n-type region towards the positive terminal. Under such circumstances no current flows across the junction; of course, a very small reverse current is always observed carried by few electrons present in the p-type silicon and by holes in the *n*-type. Such minority "carriers" are always present, but their concentration is very low. Thus a diode presents a low resistance to a signal of one polarity and a high resistance to a signal of the opposite polarity. A diode is not capable of gain, so it cannot serve as an active circuit. On the other hand, it differs from other passive devices like resistors, capacitors and inductors which show the same effects on a signal no matter which way they are connected in a circuit.

Next comes the transistor making which requires a little manipulation. This can be done by adding a third doped region to a diode so that, for example, a p-type region is sandwiched between two n-type regions. One of the n-doped areas is called

the amitter and the other the collector; pregion in between them is called the base. So, a transistor can be regarded as two diodes joined back to back on a single crystal of silicon. The operation is simple. Suppose the *n*-type emitter is assigned a potential of zero volts. In that case, we can assume that the p-type base has a small positive voltage and the *n*-type collector has a large positive voltage. Thus the emitter and the base constitute a diode operating in the forward direction: holes are drawn into the emitter and electrons are injected into the base. In this case, the voltages on the base and the collector are of the wrong polarities for conduction and only a negligible reverse current flows through the junction. Also, electrons injected into the base by the emitter are transported to the collector just like diffusion of two gases and a large current flows from the emitter to the collector. If the voltage on the base is reduced to zero or it is given a negative potential, the forward diode current from the emitter to the base is halted. Since electrons are no longer injected into the base, the emitter-collector current also stops. So, the base current controls the collector current. If the polarity of the voltage on the base is changed, the collector current can be switched on or off. Also, with proper dimensions and arrangement, the collector current can be made much larger than the base current, so that the transistor exhibits a gain. Thus a transistor can be regarded as a current-controlled resistor. If a suitable current or voltage is available to set the resistance, a transistor can be inserted into a circuit at almost every point where a resistor might be employed.

This is what constitutes the *npn* transistor, the term denoting the sequence of doped regions in the silicon. There is also the pnp type of transistor, where a *n*-type base is inserted between p-type regions, one being an emitter and the other a collector. The principles of operation are the same for a pnp transistor; only the polarities are reversed. For normal operation the base and the collector must be negative with respect to the emitter. The basic difference in this case is that the polarities of the charge carriers are now reversed. Current from emitter to col-

lector consists of holes.

The npn and pnp are called junction transistors. They are also called bipolar transistors, because in these devices both the polarities act as carrier of charges. It is the bi-polar transistor that was invented in 1948 by John Bardeen, Walter H. Brattain and William Shockley of the Bell Telephone Laboratories. The trlo were awarded the Nobel Prize in 1956 for the invention.

There is another kind of transistor. called metal oxide semiconductor field effect transistor or MOSFET. In

a typical MOSFET, two islands of n-type silicon are created in a substrate of p-type material. Connections are made directly to the islands, one of which is called the source and the other the drain. On the surface of the silicon over the channel between the source and the drain a thin layer of silicon dioxide $(8iO_2)$ is formed that acts as an insulator. On the top of the oxide, a layer of metal is deposited that forms a third electrode called the gate. Such arrangement can act as capacitor, because the gate has no direct connection with the semiconductor. Rather, it is separated by a layer of insulation. A charge placed on the gate can influence the motion; of the charge carriers in the semiconductor channel.

The mode of operation of a MOS-FET is something like this: connect the source and the substrate by an external conductor and keep them at zero potential. Give a positive voltage to the drain. Current does not flow between source and substrate, since they have zero volt, i.e. grounded. Between the drain and the substrate there is only a negligible reverse current of a diode. When no voltage is applied to the gate, the p-type channel under the gate contains the majority of holes and a few electrons can be attracted to the positive potential of the drain. Apply positive potential to the gate. Now the electric field will attract a majority population of electrons to a thin layer at the surface of the crystal immediately under the gate. Because of the presence of numerous electrons in a region that is normally p-type, the surface is said to be inverted. The inversion creates a continuous *n-*type channel from source to drain and large currents can flow. Like the bipolar transistor, the MOSFET is capable of amplification. This is the n-type MOSFET. A complementary device can also be built, which consists of two islands of p-type and a substrate of n-type, with the same capacitance arrangement. It is called P-MOS transistor. In fact all the active and passive components can be made in a single silicon substrate, and a hundred thousand of such components can now be inserted in one square centimeter of a thin silicon wafer.

The prime material for making an ▲ integrated circuit or chip is silicon, most abundantly distributed all over the earth as common sand. Sand is silicon dioxide. Silicon, purity to an extent of 99.999999 per cent is extracted from sand by a very complicated and ingenious process. A charge of pure silicon is then heated to its melting point which is 1,420 degrees Celsius. This is done in inert gas free from all sorts of contamina**tion to avoid oxidation and** unwanted impurities. At this stage the desired impurities, known as dopants (phosphorus, boron, etc.), are added to produce a specific type

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of conductivity: either positive (ptype) charge carriers or negative (n-type) ones. Then, by inserting a perfect single crystal "seed," the melted material is slowly turned and withdrawn to produce single crystals of five to seven centimeters in diameter and several meters long. The cylindrical crystal is now cut into wafers with a thin high speed diamond saw. After that the wafers are first smoothed on both sides by grinding and then are highly polished on one side. The thickness of a finished wafer is usually about half a millimeter.

The silicon wafer thus prepared is now heated in an atmosphere of oxygen or water vapour. As a result, a thin film of silicon dioxide is formed on its surface. It is a clear glass with a softening point higher than 1,400 degrees Celsius. It is hard and durable and adheres well. It acts as an excellent insulator. It can also act as a mask for the selective intro-

duction of dopants.

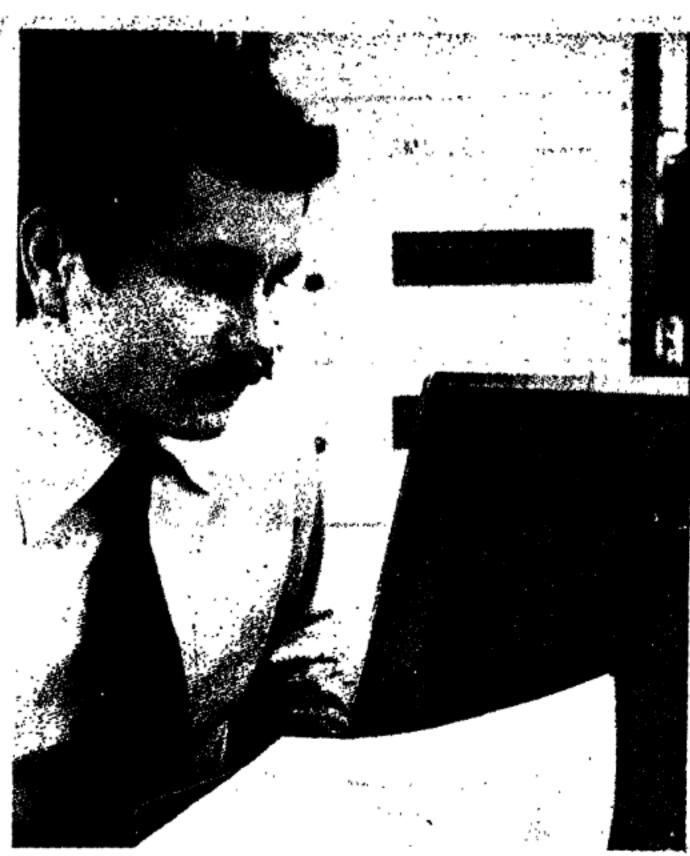
In the first stage the designers conceive of the specific functional characteristics of a microelectronic circuit. In the next stage the size and the approximate location of every circuit element are estimated. These are done with the aid of computers. From the description of computer memory set plates, called photomasks, is prepared. Each mask holds the pattern for a single layer of the circuit. After that replicas of each photomask is made. The replicas are called working plates that serve for the actual fabrication process.

The microelectronic circuit is now built up layer by layer, each layer receiving a pattern from a mask prescribed in the circuit design For this, photoengraving process, known as photolithography, is employed.

The oxidized wafer is coated with photoresist, a light-sensitive polymeric material. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation through a mask followed by development (washing in the selective solvent as is done in the case of ordinary photo development) results in the removal of the film wherever the mask is opaque. The wafer, with its photoresist pattern, is now in a solution of hydrofluoric acid. The acid dissolves the oxide layer wherever it is unprotected, but it does not attack either the photoresist or the silicon wafer itself. After the acid has removed all the silicon dioxide from the exposed areas, the wafer is rinsed and dried, and the photoresist pattern is removed by another chemical treatment.

Active circuit elements such as metaloxide-semiconductor (MOS) transistor and bipolar transistors are formed in part within the silicon substrate. These elements are constructed by selectively introducing impurities to create localized n-type and p-type regions by adding the appropriate dopant atoms.

There are two techniques for selec-



A computer which helps in forecasting weather

tively introducing dopants into the silicon crystals: diffusion and ion implantation. In the first process silicon is heated to a high temperature, say 1,000 degrees C, when impure atoms begin to move slowly through the crystal. Impurities move much more slowly through silicon dioxide than they do through silicon itself. In the ion implantation technique, the dopant atoms are ionized (stripped off one or more of their electrons) and are accelerated to a high energy by passing them through a potential difference of tens of thousands of volts. As a result the dopant atoms at the end of their path strike the silicon wafer and are confined at various depths depending on their mass and energy. However, various other techniques have been developed in this regard. There is one advantage in ion implantation technique. The ion carries a charge. So, by measuring the total charge that accumulates in the silicon crystal the number of impure atoms can be precisely determined.

Present technology can reproduce elements a few micrometres across. Electron beams and X-rays are capable of producing extremely fine features to about one micrometer Small-scale integrated circuits have 10 transistors per chip; medium scale circuits have about 100. When thousands of circuit elements are integrated on one chip, the integration is said to be large-scale (LIC). Recent microprocessors made through large-scale integration have between 10,000 and 20,000 transistors and the figure is now approaching 100,000.

It is a true revolution. India has

also been involved in electronics industries. But the paradox is that inspite of so much endeavour, it has not been possible to manufacture advanced chips. According to one veteran scientist. "If the USA and Japan stop exporting electronics-grade silicon to India, work will come to a halt over night. It is a pity that we have not been able to develop chips and also the photoengraving processes We must develop all these, otherwise importing and assembling cannot help us to catch

Samarit Kar is a well-known science writer and teaches in Science College, Calcutta

been accomplished elsewhere.

the tremendous progress that has

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Computers and society



Since the days of the Industrial Revolution, technological changes have posed serious problems to the common man. Judging from man's inherent resistance to changes, special in-

terest has been focussed on automation and its immediate and anticipated effects. And of all these, the electronic computer holds a special position. With its tremendous speed and capacity to handle large quantities of data, a computer can be looked upon as a boon. But there are dangers inherent in it if it falls in to the wrong hands. While only history can tell where the ultimate technological achievement of the century can take us, let us take a look at some of the socio-economic changes that a computer has brought about.

Automation, says one group of modern thinkers, will create more jobs than ever before, while the opposite group holds the reverse view. Shouting hoarse from high-rise concrete and steel buildings they shout: "Automation is a job-snatcher. Throw out the computer."

To the pro-automation group, the idea is nothing really new, but is instead a much more advanced phase of the Industrial Revolution. It is in fact regarded as a welcome source of many economic and social benefits. These include greater productivity and less waste, lowered cost of production, improved

methods of doing things, creation of new industries and occupation, increased employment and, above all, more leisure. Admitted that automation will result in some immediate unemployment (i.e. in the areas where automation is implemented), but this unemployment will be temporary and in the long run, the dislocated workers will be absorbed in new secondary jobs created out of the expanding economy and better business.

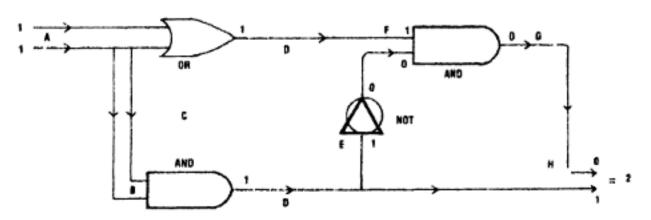
The anti-automation group views this optimistic outlook as wishful thinking, based on outdated economic premises. They believe in applying archaic theories and extending the IR theory to date is invalid. Although the long-range trend of nationwide employment is upward, the productivity of factories and offices is rising so much faster, that the annual addition to the labour force is not being fully absorbed.

With proliferation of computers and micro-processor based systems, man's dependence on them has reached such a state that someone once said that he did not fear computers but he feared the lack of them. As computers require a high degree of standardisation to run efficiently, many have been put off by the impersonal behaviour of computers in cases of government or business procedures and billing operation. Such de-personalised treatment from computers have caused individuals to feel that they have to fulfill the computers' needs instead of it being the other way round.

Some social critics view the widespread use of computers, making them as common as television sets, with some apprehension. Such usage may cause the eventual atrophy of human intellectual ability. Many a student with a pocket calculator, has been relieved of doing his figures on paper. This has led to the belief that the young people and even the old might just forget using their head for calculations, however simple they might be. But scientists and thinkers have often viewed intelligent men wasting their time on repetitive and tedious calculations with disfavour. Such jobs, they say, should be left to the drones—the computers of today.

It would not be out of place to mention the thoughts of sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset who has visualised a more "egalitarian society" because of a computer. Transferring so much work to the machines, thinks Mr Lipset, may produce something akin to Athenian democracy; Athenians could be equal because they had slaves to do their work for them.

How a computer calculates





A computer, unlike c o n v e n t i o n a l methods, does not handle numbers in the decimal form but in the binary form. Binary numbers can be represented by just two values, 1 and 0,

unlike the decimal system where values can be from 0-9. Electrically 1 and 0 are easiest to represent, on for 1 and off for 0. Given below are some binary numbers with their decimal equivalents:

1=1 101=5 1001=9 1101=13 10=2 110=6 1010=10 1110=14 11=3 111=7 1011=11 1111=15 100=4 1000=8 1100=12 10000=16

Working with long strings of 1s and 0s would be very tedious for human beings, but would be very easy on a digital computer. It would consist of switches, an on switch would be 1 and an off switch would be 0. A computer adds by using three logical functions, AND, OR and NOT. With a combination of these how a half-adder works is shown below. Multiplication is done by multiple

addition, division by multiple subtraction, and subtraction by a method called finding the complements where resultant 1s are changed to 0s and 0s to 1s.

Below is the legend for the fi-

A. Here the binary bits 1s enter the logic circuits to be processed.

B. The input signals are split so that they reach the OR and AND gate simultaneously.

C. Both the OR gate and the AND gate have 1s as input and so output 1 also.

D. The output of the OR gate proceeds towards the second AND gate while the output of the AND gate is split, one going to the output, the other to the NOT gate.

E. A NOT gate is basically an inverter and so a binary digit 1 gets converted to zero.

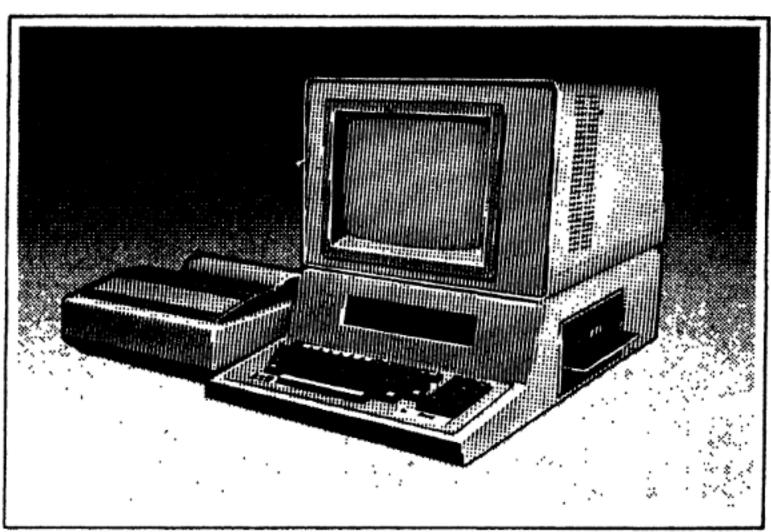
F. The inverted output 'zero' from the NOT gate fed along with OR output 1 to the second AND gate. G. Since one of the inputs to this AND gate is 0, so result outputted is also zero.

H. So finally the original two signals of 1 each emerge as 1 and 0, i.e. binary notation for 2.

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Computer-talk

With the proliferation of computers and microprocessors, there has been a phenomenal spurt in the use of jargon associated with it. Given below are some of these words and phrases and their meanings.

Analog computer: A calculating device that operates on numbers represented by measurable physical quantities, like rotation of shaft, the amount of voltage,

temperature etc.

Arithmetic logical unit: Part of the computer processing section that does the adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing and comparing.

Bar code: A coding system using bars or strips of various

widths to denote numeric values.

BASIC: Acronym for Beginners' All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code. A mathematical problem-oriented lan-

Binary number system: A number system using base as opposed to the decimal number system which uses base

Bit: The smallest unit of information in the Binary number system. An abbreviation of "Binary digit." Normally a bit refers to one ("on") while a no bit refers

to zero ("off").

Buffer: A temporary or intermediate storage unit used to hold data being transmitted between internal and external storage units, or between input-output devices. Cathode ray tube (CRT): Acronym for video display. An electronic vacuum tube containing a screen on which any data may be displayed either in graphic form or character representation.

Cobol: Common Business Oriented Language. A coding language by which business data processing procedures may be precisely described in a standard form.

Code: A set of rules used to convert data from one representation to another. This is usually done to economise on media space.

Compiler: A programmed system that produces a programme from a series of source statements. In fact a compiler transforms a higher level language to a lower level machine language.

Debug: To detect, locate and remove all malfunctions from a computer or all mistakes from a programme

routine.

Digital Computer: A calculating device utilising numbers to express all the variables and quantities of a

problem.

Distributed processing: A system that assigns tasks in a large organisation to smaller computers on the basis of location or type of task. These smaller computers may augment or replace a large, centralised computer.

Hardware: A colloquialism applied to the mechanical, electronic and electric features of a data processing system.

Hybrid computer: A computer system that combines analog and digital capabilities.

Input: Information that is transferred into the computer for storage either from an external storage media or directly.

Machine language: A language that is directly machine

readable.

Magnetic disc: A flat circular plate with a magnetic surface on which data can be stored by selective magnetisations of portions of the flat surface. They can either be flexible and called floppies or be rigid and called fixed or hard discs.

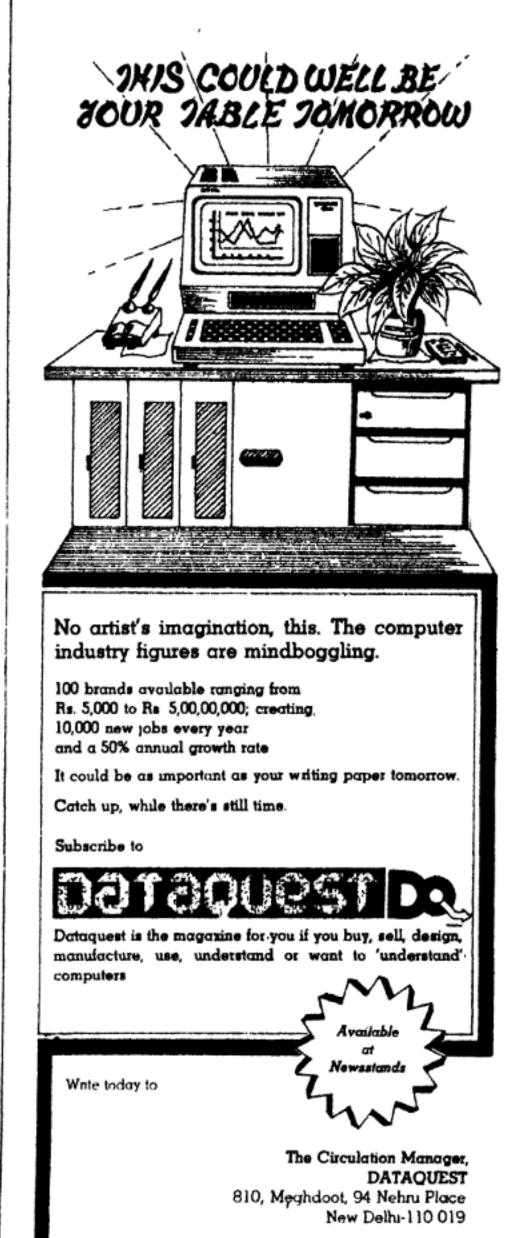
Memory: The part of the computer that stores the programme, holds intermediate results and various

constant data.

Multi-programming: Pertaining to the concurrent execution of two or more programmes by a computer. Offline: Relating to equipment or devices not under

control of the central processing unit.

Compiled by Uttam Sengupta



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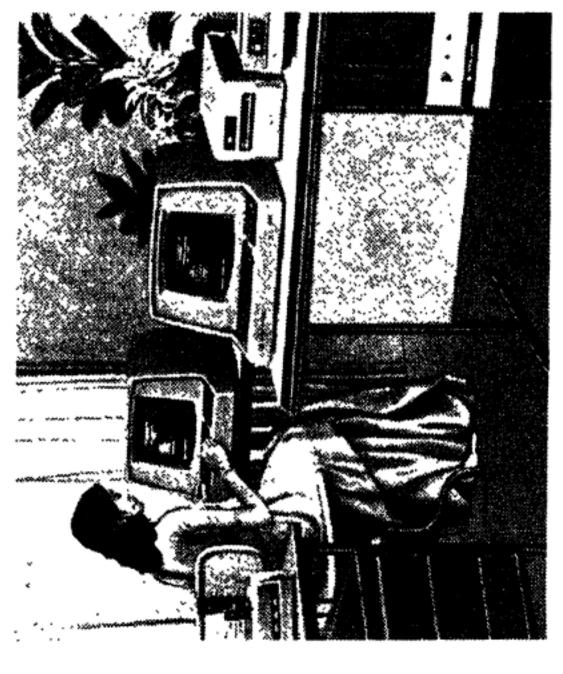
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Series: the computer that's different

Is the CPI(M) losing its grip?

he results of the recent panchayat elections and the two Assembly byelections in West Bengal have made one thing evident: the CPI(M)'s popularity is eroding. Though the details of the election results have not been compiled as yet, it appears that the CPI(M) has lost at least 10 per cent of its votes in the rural areas, compared to the number of votes the party polled in the panchayat elections of 1978. Even in the two byelections (Jadavpur and Garden Reach), the number of votes polled by the CPI(M) was less than in the Assembly elections of 1982 For instance, in the Jadavpur Assembly constituency, from where Dr Ashok Mitra contested, the number of votes polled by the CPI(M) was less by about four per cent, compared to the votes the party had polled in 1982. Again, though the CPI(M) fielded about 4,000 more candidates for the panchayat elections, it won about 4,000 less seats. In the gram panchayat elections, the CPI(M) won about 60 per cent of the total seats in 1978; this time the party won 53 per cent of the scats.

This erosion in the CPI(M)'s support was especially noticeable on the eastern bank of the Ganges and in the districts surrounding Calcutta. In the districts lying on the east of the Ganges, the CPI(M)'s tally has gone down by more than 15 per cent and they have lost control over about 1,000 panchayats. In the districts surrounding Calcutta—Howrah, Hooghly and 24 Parganas—the CPI(M) has polled 18 per cent less votes this time compared to 1978.

In the four districts on the eastern bank of the Ganges—West Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad and North 24 Parganas—which have a sizeable Muslim population, the CPI(M)'s performance this time was poor. A huge chunk of Bengali Muslims undoubtedly voted against the party. There are Muslims in Burdwan district also, but they did not vote, en masse, against the CPI(M) and that is why the party could secure more than 75 per cent of the seats in the village panchayats of Burdwan district.

Moreover, during the election campaign the CPI(M) was politically isolated in rural West Bengal. Even the Left Front partners campaigned against the CPI(M) vigorously Juring the elections. This helped not only the Congress(I) but also the rural gentry who were all waiting for an opportunity to come out openly against the CPI(M). After the elections many clashes are being reported from different dis-



By BARUN SENGUPTA

tricts of West Bengal. Most of these clashes are between the CPI(M) and the Congress(I) and between the CPI(M) and the CPI or the Forward Bloc. At a recent meeting of the Left Front committee one RSP representative asked the CPI(M) leaders point blank "Please tell us whether you would allow us to work in the state or not." The Forward Bloc representative posed another question, "When would the CPI(M) stop attacking the workers of other Lett Front partners in the villages?" The state Congress(I) president has openly accused the CPI(M) of instigating violent incidents in the state. In the rural areas during the last six years no one dared to pro-(est against the CPI(M) During the panchavat elections in most of the districts anti-CPI(M) forces took advantage of CPI(M)'s isolation and raised their voice against them.

In rural West Bengal the CPI(M) is still a very major force, but the rest of the political parties are now vocal and they together secured more than 55 per cent of the votes in the panchayat election. The CPI(M) could secure about 45 per cent votes mainly on the basis of their organisational strength and their official patronage. A week before the elections, the CPI(M) controlled village panchayats distributed huge quantities of wheat and money which swayed many votes their way.

The 1982 Assembly elections in West Bengal had made it clear that the CPI(M) had lost a sizeable numbers of votes in urban areas. Even in district towns the CPI(M) candidates got less votes than the Congress(I). After the Assembly elections a CPI(M) leader had proclaimed that though their support had gone down in the urban areas.

At a recent meeting of the Left Front committee a Forward Bloc representative posed a question: "When will the CPI(M) stop attacking the workers of the other Left Front partners in the villages?"

their position was intact in rural West Bengal. The Congress(I) secured about 25 per cent of the votes in rural West Bengal during the 1982 Assembly election. During the panchayat elections they secured more than 35 per cent of votes in the villages of the state. Their position would have been much better had the leadership been more able. The state PCC(I) leadership managed the panchayat election much more efficiently than in the last Assembly elections. Even then it was evident that the party could not match the CPI(M)'s organisational abilities in tural Bengal. However, the results of the panchayat elections have encouraged the Congress(1) in the state

What remains to be seen is how the CPI(M) is going to tackle this situation. Promode Dasgupta is no more on the scene; Mr Jvoti Basu and some other senior leadersofthe CPI(M) are not keeping good health; the organisation at the lower level is now largely dominated by self-seekers with a large number of dedicated workers having been edged out of the party. Thus, the CPI(M), it appears, will have to face this new political situation with a weaker leadership and a less cohe-

sive organisation.

The party, however, has one major advantage which it has been enjoying for the past six years: the main opposition party in the state, the Congress(I), is still a disorganised force. Party leaders are changed frequently by the high command, the workers are uncertain about the policies of the party, and though the present PCC(I) leadership has managed the panchayat elections with a certain amount of efficiency, it is not known for how long these leaders will be in power During the last Assembly elections, it was Mr Ghani Khan Choudhury who had managed the election campaigns; for the panchayar elections, Mr Pranab Mukherjee was put in charge But most of the state Congress(I) workers do not know for how long Mr Mukheriee will continue to look after the affairs of the party in the state. Already, forces opposed to Mr Mukherjee have started campaigning against him

Yet, most of the votes that the Congress(1) received during the panchayat elections were negative votes: those cast by people who were disillusioned with the CPI(M). But the important question is: Will the Congress(1) be able to turn to its advantage, in future, the growing anti-CPI(M) feeling in the rural

areas?

Who is to blame for the Punjab crisis?

By RAJENDRA SAREEN

uring a recent visit to Punjab, I found much to cause anguish and make me feel ashamed of being a Punjabi. Far too many things have got fouled up culminating in the mess that one finds. There is no single factor which can be identified as the sole cause or even the starting point of what has gone wrong. Given all that, it would be a mistake to lose sight of the fact that, notwithstanding the negative developments, the people of Punjab have retained then sense of perspective. Patiala is symptomatic of what the malcontents are capable of doing and the urgent need to curb their propensities. But the prompt manner in which Sant Longowal and Dr Baldev Prakash spoke out to denounce this disgrace to the fair name of Punjab stands out as a beacon of hope.

Religious demands apart, the political and economic issues raised by the Akali Dal are the offshoots of the manner in which the reorganisation of the Punjab State was im

plemented in 1966. It is unfortunately true that none of those concerned with this issue at that time gave much thought to its implications. Be it the then union home minister, Gulzarılal Nanda, or the state chief minister, Ram Kishan, the two Akali factions led by Sant Fateh Singh and Master Tara Singh or the Arya Samajists and other spokesmen of Hindu opinion in Punjab-all of them conducted the debate on this immensely vital question with a casualness that was truly appalling There was a total indifference to the long-term consequences of the arrangements being worked out. But it is absolutely incorrect to trace if to an anti-Sikh bias in the government. I know from personal knowledge, having dealt with the matter as an officer of the Punjab government, that to whatever extent the arrangement worked out in 1966 failed to satisfy the Sikh aspirations, the responsibility rested primarily with the Akali leaders because they failed to speak out with clarity and preci-

sion on what they wanted done. Sant Fatch Singh had gone abroad precisely at a time when crucial issues relating to the future of the new Punjabi state were in the making. In his absence nobody could speak with authority and finality because the other leaders were badly split among themselves and for some ten weeks or so there was no unanimity among the Akali leadership as to whether there should be a larger Punjabi-speaking state or a more restricted

area to ensure Sikh majority. It is true that the role of Mr Gulzarilal Nanda was not worthy of his position as home minister of India He was motivated by petty considerations and felt that the creation of a Haryana state would provide him with a fiefdom to promote his political interests. And now a situation has developed where we are confronted with acrimonious political wrangles over peripheral matters which should not have been allowed to develop if only everybody had acted with a sense of responsibility in a straightforward and honest manner. In the event, there is a strong case for a detailed reexamination of the issues raised by the Akali Dal and even a stronger case to satisfy the Sikhs. But if it is not to be an exercise in futility, the Sikh leaders will have to ponder over the implications of the content of their demands and the consequences of their approach if we are not to stumble into another series of counterproductive solutions. -

Viewed from that angle, it is wrong and unjustified to dismiss the importance of seeking an assurance from the Akalis that after their demands have been met they would take a firm stand against secessionists and others who find a safe haven in the gurdwaras after committing murders and worse. The Akali ambivalence on this issue is a serious cause for concern and has very explosive implications.

For some 35 years, the Punjabis have taken far too many things for granted and it comes as a shock to them that the process has come to a dead end. It is the moment of truth for Punjab and as such it is something to be grateful about inasmuch as the deteriorating situation has brought us to a point where there is no alternative except to purge.

Sant Bhindranwale in consultation with his followers: radical leadership



ourselves of degenerative attitudes as a result of which we are in the present mess.

It is clear to me beyond a shadow of doubt that whatever is in the interests of the Sikhs cannot be detrimental to the nation. It is a measure of the general decline in our sensibilities and capacity to look at things in the proper perspective that the problem of Hindu-Sikh relations in Punjab is loosely discussed in terms of what goes vaguely under the title of Khalistan, and parallels are drawn with the pre-partition days of the 1940s. This attitude has a considerable lot to do with the collapse of comprehension and integrity among our political functionaries. Equally, the collapse of the social value system has had an impact on the level of competence in handling the political affairs of the state. The paralysis of the political processes is the root cause of the malaise. It is symptomatic of the present style of politics that the horrible Patiala incidents had their linkages with factional politics in the Punjab Congress. Obviously politics has become impervious to human misery.

For the Hindus of Punjab to fight against the erosion of a traditional value system which has fouled up the state's socio-political environment as an issue of their own sectional survival cannot but create confusion and prevent the basic issues from being clearly defined and considered in perspective. For the Sikhs to work themselves up into a psychosis that their socio-religious existence is in jeopardy is the ultimate in the loss of perspective and collapse of selfconfidence. There is a strong need for an adequate study of the various dimensions of the issues involved and the process through which the two communities have gradually reached the present level of alienation and the factors responsible for the virtual paralysis of the political processes in Punjab to determine what has gone wrong with it and how.

The loss of direction and sense of purpose has resulted in an atmosphere of drift. The atmosphere in Punjab is something closer to what Guru Nanak raised his voice against and sought to correct through his message. Equally relevant in the present times is Guru Gobind Singh's message of collective struggle to uphold a framework of value system. The sum total of Sikh philosophy and thought represents the best that the Punjabis are capable of evolving for social reform and progress. There is no need to look farther afield for solutions to our problems. Those who talk of a Hindu onslaught against Sikh values do not know what they are talking about. It is a measure of their incapacity to comprehend the objective realities both at the conceptual and social levels. It may not be their intention but there is something apostatic about the manner in. The Sikhs who talk of "an organised attempt to decimate and liquidate the Sikhs" and their Hindu counterparts who speak with ominous vengefulness of the "Hindu backlash" are driven by a death wish which bodes ill for Punjab and its people.

which some of the sectarian high priests are seeking to misinterpret the basic tenets of Sikh faith. Synthesis and homogeneity through the concept of catholicity of outlook and oneness of humanity were the principal contributions of Sikhism. A contrary direction is altogether repugnant to the basic tenets of the faith.

Politics, however, invariably distorts both history and religion. In the contemporary situation, a major new development is the emergence of a well-organised extremist group with the avowed objective of escalating trouble and sabotaging the prospects of a settlement. I am very reluctant to make allegations but there is enough empirical evidence to indicate the possibility of the extremists being susceptible to manipulation by outside influences. In any event, the motivation of the extremists is frankly secessionist.

During the last two years whenever the situation moved closer to a solution there has been a sudden spurt in the extremist activity, with a matching hardening of the authorities' attitude. The Akali leaders have a grievance that if they soften their stand, the government loses interest in serious negotiations and when their stand hardens, the official argument is that no settlement can be worked out under pressure. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the extremists are not at all interested in a solution but escalation of conflict. Either the extremists have imposed their-yiews on the Akali leadership or in the event of

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their being unsuccessful in having their way, they have independently taken recourse to violence to blight the chances of a settlement. The dastardly killing of DIG Atwal and the long line of murders that preceded it is a case in point. I was shocked to hear a prominent Akali leader arguing that those who killed Mr Atwal were not criminals because the deceased was a "sinful" man having harmed the Panthic cause and therefore his killing was in the discharge of a "religious obligation." The pressure mounted on the Akali leadership to call for the disruption of the Asiad was still another. The mobilisation of the ex-servicemen to organise and mastermind the defiance of the government and not-soveiled indications that the recourse to violence was not ruled out are serious indicators of the realities on the ground. Each one of these has been responded to by the authorities and we have had unconscionably ghastly situations such as the liquidation of suspected extremists, interference with the right of movement of Sikhs travelling through Haryana on their way to Delhi, the unfortunate loss of life in the rasta roko stir and numerous other incidents which hurt and humiliated the Sikhs not all of whom were political agitators. The point of the matter is that if politics is reduced to a level where political action through discussion stands ruled out and bellige. rent violation of law and police action by the authorities becomes the norm, then it cannot but foul up the atmosphere and impede the evolution of a settlement based on goodwill and understanding. This is something which the political leaders as well as the government authorities have both to bear in mind.

The press in Punjab, barring the Tribune and some ideologically committed party organs of the Left, stands acutely polarised along communal lines as instruments of Hindu and Sikh extremes with conflict as the point of reference. The alienation of the two communities is fully reflected in the intemperate and irrational articulation of their views on contemporary issues and historical retrospect. A representative compilation of this may serve the same purpose as is done by the films depicting horrors of traffic accidents which the offenders are forced to sit through in certain countries. Presumably not many among both Hindus and Sikhs are even aware of the deliberate and calculated attempts to cause offence and emotional hurt by resorting to suppressio veri suggestio falsi. A compilation of this nature circulated to the political leaders of various parties and the mediamen would serve to inhibit the exponents of communal views in their public expressions. This thing could also be usefully distributed among the Punjabi communities settled abroad.

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Road blockade put up by Akali demonstrators, will violence solve problems?

Sant Harchand Singh Longowal as leader of the struggle has a tremendous responsibility cast on his shoulders. It is essential to ponder over the consequences of allowing the present unfortunate situation to run its logical course. In the 1920s Mahatma Gandhi was faced with a similar dilemma when the accumulated anger and frustration of the people of Chauri Chaura had given a turn to the freedom movement which was contrary to the Mahatma's concept of non-violence. Unmindful of the criticism of his colleagues, he called off the struggle rather than abdicate in favour of the extremists. Those who are nudging the Akali high command to take an extremist position are pursuing objectives which are totally incapable of a solution within the framework of Indian nationalism. To allow them to determine the course of events will render the moderate Akali leadership irrelevant. The result would throw Punjab into the vortex of conflict and conflagration which cannot but leave serious scars on our future. But, even allowing for the very worst they are capable of perpetrating, the extremists are bound to fail because a nation cannot be paralysed to the extent of causing a

break-up by a lunatic fringe. But the community in whose name they act is bound to be saddled with the debris of the agitators' senselessness. When all is said and done, the Sikhs themselves will not countenance this mad venture because there is hardly a family which does not have a stake in some place or the other outside Punjab.

The Sikhs who talk of "an organised attempt to decimate and liquidate the Sikhs" and their Hindu couterparts who speak with ominous vengefulness of the "Hindu backlash" are driven by a death-wish which bodes ill for Punjab and its people. If the issue gets converted into a secessionist attempt to cause disintegration of the nation then all talk of a solution will have become altogether irrelevant. Whatever the failures of the ruling party and acts of omission and commission by the authorities, the nation will not idly stand by and let the secessionists have their way.

The Punjabis, both Hindus and Sikhs, have been the principal beneficiaries of the country's post-freedom power structure. During the last 37 years, they have emerged as the largest single community occupying positions of trust and authority.

The schism that is beginning to develop between the two components of the Punjabis cannot but damage this privileged position. Once Punjab begins to be seen as a cantankerous nuisance in the national context, the damage may be gradual but is bound to be pervasive.

Punjab is virtually on the crossroads. Its future over the next decade or two will hinge on the turn the leadership takes. It is not the first time that the Punjabis are so placed. But on no earlier occasion have the negative elements been so pronounced as they are today.

In 1947, when millions of people divested of their property and possessions trekked into free India, the whole country's resources were diverted in a magnificent gesture to rehabilitate the victims of that historical upheaval. An overwhelming portion of the development expenditure between 1947 and 1951 was earmarked for their rehabilitation. Again, an overwhelming component of the first five-year plan was committed for the creation of the infrastructure which made it possible for the hard-working Punjabis to miraculously transform the backward east Punjab into the most prosperous area of the subcontinent. It was literally a case of dust turning into gold. Our efforts did it; but the massive diversion of total national resources to the needs of Punjab created the opportunity.

In 1962, when the Chinese attacked LIndia, petty-minded spiteful detractors accused S. Partap Singh Kairon of trying to project his political interests through massive mobilisation of contributions to the National Defence Fund. Little did they realise that Punjab's pioneering role under his dynamic leadership created such a massive goodwill for the state throughout the country that vast opportunities opened up for the benefit of its people. Sardar Kairon had the foresight to perceive that in the given situation there would be vast expansion of the defence forces to safeguard the country's territorial integrity. So, he arranged to run pre-selection training centres for the young men of the state to give them an initial advantage over the candidates from other states in the selection of officers for the armed forces. He had neither demanded percentage reservations nor sought to increase his leverage by threatening the rest of the country in its moment of need. The rest of India appreciated what Punjab did under Sardar Kairon's leadership and the Punjabis cornered a disproportionately large share of opportunities that developed during the 1960s. Today-Punjab gets approximately Rs. 400 crore a year by way of remittances representing pay and pensions of the defence personnel.

By the end of the 1950s agricultural production was beginning to level off. There was serious concern will for Punjab helped the people among the people of Punjab over what would happen to the state's prosperity. Sardar Kairon set up an agricultural university at Ludhiana and expanded the scope of the Hissar agricultural college thereby creating the infrastructure for bringing technology and scientific research to the aid of the Punjabi farmer. The extension services provided by Hissar and Ludhiana pioneered the green revolution that broke through in the mid-60s.

Once again, we have a situation where there are serious anxieties about whether Punjab can sustain its prosperity or not. Anything that is good for the Sikhs cannot be bad either for the Hindus or for the Punjab or, for that matter, for the nation as such. It is legitimate to be concerned but totally untenable to become belligerent and raucous, thereby destroying the very basis for securing smooth transition from one set of circumstances to another so that the state's vital interests are preserved and protected. The manner in which a controversy had been raised over Rajasthan's entitlement to water is not only unfortunate but absolutely ruinous so far as Punjab's larger interests are concerned. Whatever the amount of water we can corner, it will not take us very far. The density of population and intensive agriculture in Punjab have virtually reached a saturation point. The farmers of Punjab prospered during the Fifties and the Sixties not by creating conflicts and controversies but by spreading out first to Ambala, Karnal and Hissar districts and later on the Terai area of UP. If today new areas open up in Rajasthan, the opportunities will be as much for the benefit of the Punjabi farmers as for the prosperity of the state of Rajasthan. Rajasthan has a proud tradition of an open-door policy which ought not to be put under strain. Bargaining is indicated for ensuring that the Punjabis are not denied a share in the newly developed areas rather than to obstruct the process.

The prosperity of Punjab during the rest of this century is not going to be based exclusively on agriculture. It is time not to raise controversies but to ponder and consider the thrust of economic and technological development during the next two decades and then evolve a strategy to ensure that the headstart the state has is neither dissipated nor ob-

structed.

Punjab's prosperity has never had any linkage with protectionism. It has primarily emanated from unrestricted opportunities. The manner in which Punjabi suba demand was pressed and the haste with which it was implemented in 1966 created serious constraints for the people of Punjab and these could have badly curtailed the scope for their growth. The vast measure of goodwill for Punjab helped the people tide over the aftermath of the Punjabi suba without any serious damage to their interests. Today, the state is saddled with the tangles arising out of the loose threads getting tied into knots because nobody has the time or the inclination to consider the consequences of what was being done. Now at least let the leaders work out the long-term implications of what they seek lest the people get into a blind alley all over again. There are people like Sardar Tarlok Singh and Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh who had reached the very top on the national scene and are dedicated to the interests and prosperity of Punjab. There are any number of lesser people at the midlevel who can perceive and work out a framework for the protection of Punjab's interests, resources and prospects. Let them apply their minds and submit a blueprint to the leaders and people of Punjab.

To allow the situation to end up in conflict at this point will only mean conflict without purpose for the sake of conflict. That is what the extremists want. This is what both the government of India and the Akali leadership must not allow to happen. But it is clear that even if there is an agreement between the government and the Akali Dal, it would be unpardonable to slide back into complacency. Punjab seems set for a turbulent period ahead. To eliminate the factors that contribute to this unwholesome situation I suggest a serious study traversing the following points:

 To what extent has the incipient tendency to work up communal feelings been responsible for the polarisa-

tion in Punjab?

A very systematic study should be conducted into the effect of socioeconomic policies to exclude the unintended areas of stress for socioeconomic groups, particularly the Sikhs. Has any lapse on the part of the administration, indeed, created a basis

for grievance?

A thorough examination of the archives of the period relating to the enactment of the Gurdwaras Act in 1921 and the period 1940 to 1947 to determine the assurances which were held out to the Sikh leaders in regard to their position in India after independence, the enactment of the Constitution and the consultations and discussions held with the representative Sikh leaders between 1948 and 1951 in respect of the constitutional provisions having a bearing on the position of the Sikhs.

4) A historical research study into the period preceding Maharaja Ranjit Singh; the socio-economic and religious impulses which contributed to the emergence of the Sikh empire; the political structure which served the Punjabis so well during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's lifetime and the factors that caused the collapse of the empire soon after his demise; and, the nature and pattern of

Hindu-Sikh relations during the only period when Punjab was under Sikh rule.

A review of the economic and political policies of the government of India after 1947 with special reference to the .. impact on refugee rehabilitation. The point to examine is the impact of the commitment of national resources for creating an infrastructure in jab and to what extent has it contributed to the prosperity of the state. The extent of commitment of resources during the first ten years of free India should be taken into account, in particular, the ratio earmarked for Punjab and whether any discriminatory preferences can be detected in this regard. The attempts made by successive Sikh Congress leaders to get a foothold in the SGPC through playing up clash of ambition and factional infights among Akalis. Why have the repeated efforts made by Congress and the Akalis to merge with each other come unstuck?

The impulses which led the Hindus in Punjab to declare Hindi and not Punjabi as their mother tongue. The linguistic pattern in the sub-continent and the specific aspects of the problem in Punjab should be examined.

A complete documentation of the contribution of the Sikhs to the freedom struggle. Most of the militant movements in Punjab were led or sustained by different groups of Sikh leaders. What are the socio-economic factors responsible for the Sikh youth and intellectuals not coming out to play their traditional role in providing leadership in spheres social, scientific and intellectual?

To what extent is the prosperity of Punjab contingent on the opportunities availed by the Punjabis outside the state and what kind of linkages are there in this regard?

The causes of the decline of the intellectual standards among the Hin-

dus in Punjab.

11) The factors which have contributed to the alienation among the two communities. Is it that a clash of interests has developed between the two?Or, is it that they have just got so used to each other that they are beginning to take each other for granted? Could it be that there is a lack of perspective which is gradually aggravating into a state of mind? If so, what are the possible remedies?

These are the probable sources of the trouble in Punjab. Any solution attempted in terms of personality factor would leave the malaise intact and the state would continue to be vulnerable to frequent outbursts. Unfortunately, the problem of Punjab tends to be debated at the level of the worst case assumption. Without any desire to understate the disturbing implications of the situations, I would like to say that the ground realities, distressing though they are, do not warrant the prophecies of doom that are being advanced in such prolific abundance

The real threat to India

By PRAN CHOPRA

rises have become the political diet of Mrs Gandhi. She loves them, invites them, invents them, and it was a very revealing slip of the tongue when, in an interview with Arab News the other day she said, as reported, "We have many problems on the anvil." On the anvil of her politics she has indeed hammered out many problems where others would have laboured to shape solutions instead.

Why does she do so? At the end of a discussion about Assam and Punjab in Sunday of 1 May I raised this question but at that time replied only that "there are many possible answers to this question, each more disturbing than the others." I left it at that because my purpose in that article was only to emphasise that we ourselves, and not some imaginary "foreign hand" as Mrs Gandhi alleges, are responsible for the dangerous crises we face in Punjab and Assam. Now I want to turn to

some of these answers.

Not all the problems are of Mrs Gandhi's making, of course. Anyone who occupied her place would have many of them on his plate. But she is inclined to, or likes to, let the temperature of every problem rise to crisis level. For a long time the reason for this was assumed to be a psychological compulsion, a personality response to a self-assumed or built up image. Because of the abundant adulation offered her as "a woman of crisis," crises have become her favoured medium of action, like a school boy who constantly turns only to subjects which he feels he can handle well. But this was never a total explanation and now is even less so.

More hard-headed political calculations have taken over. It has become her strategy that one crisis or another should always be at hand, ready cooked, whenever needed. Needed for what? That is the real question, and the answer she has hammered out on her anvil is the real threat to India's peace, stability and unity. She wants to keep the country on the tenterhooks of continuous crises because that leaves her options, both authoritarian and democratic, continuously open.

Take a look at the first option first.

A leader who wants to see himself

dressed in a capital also wants others to see him the same way, as the 'Supreme Leader'. Both perceptions, his own and the people's, are assisted by two things: one, that he should be surrounded only by dwarfs; the other, a general and pervasive sense of insecurity which creates among the people a felt need for a strong leader as a shield against continuing inclemencies. The first condition Mrs Gandhi achieved a long time ago. We have never had so many pigmies as cabinet ministers and as stalwarts of the ruling party as we have had since Mrs Gandhi become the Prime Minister and party leader. There was a brief time in her leadership when this was not'so (and that was when she was not only



It has become her (Mrs Gandhi's) strategy that one crisis or another should always be at hand, ready cooked, whenever needed. Needed for what? That is the real question, and the answer she has hammered out on her anvil is the real threat to India's peace, stability and unity.

powerful but great). But dwarfs and pigmies have been almost her only companions ever since she imposed the Emergency; almost the only exceptions have been a few toughs and evil geniuses.

The second condition she achieves

as crises multiply and simmer and one or another always threatens to boil over. This creates excuses for many variations on the authoritarian option. The simplest is the accumulation of personal power, to which she has no objection at all. Procedures, conventions, the ambitions of colleagues or rivals, and all such constraints upon personal power fall away, alike in the eyes of the rulers and the ruled, if the pressures of a mounting crisis are, or can be made to seem to be, convincing enough. Secondly, even the constraints of a democratic constitution fall away, as is proved by Mrs Gandhi's own recent history and the history of many crisis-ridden countries of the third world. If survival can be convincingly shown to be at stake, no one bothers too much about democracy.

The lessons of the Emergency must

be fresh in Mrs Gandhi's mind, espe-

cially the relief with which many

people greeted it as the answer to what they saw as chaos gathering

around them. Quite possibly another

lesson she remembers is that it is a mistake to call elections only eight-

een months after proclaiming

Emergency.

A sense of crisis also widens the democratic option for Mrs Gandhi by improving her electoral chances. In any realistic appraisal, her present vote prospects should be a cause of some anxiety for her. She has lost practically the whole of the South for long enough, if not forever, for her to abandon hopes of winning a strong base there in a Lok Sabha election, which is in any case due no later than the beginning of 1985 and might have to be called quite a bit sooner than that. Sufficiently compensatory gains in the Hindi heartland in the north are also unlikely in the present circumstances. But her prospects in the Hindi belt can change materially if she can arouse or rekindle the hurt or lost pride of "Aryavarta" in the destiny of Hindu India.

It has happened often that if a secessionist threat develops in one

part of the country, or a convincing case can be made out that it has developed, all or most other parts band together behind the national centre in a mood of an assertive national unity. This is especially so if the "threat" (whether real or imaginary is almost immaterial in this context so long as the threat is convincing enough), comes from a non-Hindu minority. Or from a state which is at the Indian periphery because such states are best able to provoke a reaction from the special pride in the unity of India, and the responsibility for preserving it, which the Aryavarta or the Hindi heartland credits itself with. In this context the meeting on 14 May between Mrs Gandhi and Mr Charan Singh has a lot of meaning, the full extent of which will reveal itself only later on.

It quite fits in with Mrs Gandhi's ambition of winning and retaining overwhelming electoral support in the Hindi heartland if credible threats to India's unity can be shown to have arisen in the areas which lie outside the core of the pride of Aryavarta areaslike Assam, Punjab, and the southern states. It is true enough, and tragic too, that a certain kind of threat can be honestly shown to be lurking in some of these areas. But the uneasiness which the threat arouses can be converted into votes for a 'Strong Leader' and a 'Strong Central Government' only if the threat looms larger than life and 'The Leader' can be seen to be the only force standing between India and chaos.

A politician who recognises this, and Mrs Gandhi is astute enough a politician to recognise it, would have to be a person of extraordinary rectitude not to make an electoral investment in the threat, that is, not keep it alive a little longer and looming a little larger than the reality warrants or true statesmanship permits.

Of course, the pride of Aryavartais largely a Hindu pride and indulging it beyond a point can cost Mrs Gandhi the traditionally pro-Congress vote of the Muslims, the other minorities, and the harijans. But I would not be surprised if Mrs Gandhi has already taken this risk into account and come to the conclusion that while she would like to retain the support of the minorities as long as possible, with measures such as she has proposed in her letter to the union home minister and other cabinet colleagues, she will jettison this support if she cannot retain it along with her efforts to stoke up support among the Hindus of the Hindi heartland, which stretches from Jammu to the West Bengal border and south down to the Vindhyas. This could also bring her the support of non-Hindi-speaking but Sanskritised Hindus of the non-Hindi-speaking areas.

These are not idle calculations on her part. They have paid off already

in Punjab and Haryana where the Hindus see her, and not the BJP or the Lok Dal any longer, as their protector against what they see as Akali chauvinism. It is paying off in Jammu, where the Hindu vote, in reaction to what they see as the Muslim dominance of the National Conference, is moving away from BJP to the Congress (I). It is paying off in UP, where Andhra and Karnataka are seen as the latest wolves of a southern chauvinism first kindled by the Dravid parties of Tamil Nadu. It has paid her off among the Bengali voters in Assam (to the welldeserved humiliation of CPI-M), and it is compensating her for the loss of the vote of the Assamese Hindus, which is compensated already to some extent by the dividends still paid there by the older policy of

wooing the minority vote.

It is not very material for India's future as to whether Mrs Gandhi will or will not succeed in improving her electoral chance by stoking up an induced feeling of insecurity. But what is material is that serious dangers for India are inherent in the use of such tactics. First of all there is the very real danger that an induced crisis, if it is allowed to drag out for very long because it is a convenient tool for manipulating politics, might get out of hand and become a real danger, as the crisis in Assam did and the one in Punjab seems about to do. India's national fabric is probably strong enough to withstand the strain of its many problems, provided these are guided towards rational solutions by a wise, tolerant and accommodative leadership. But is it also strong enough to withstand tension between regions, religions, languages and groups of various kinds if these are deliberately worked up by the leadership itself in its own narrow interests? I doubt that...

The second and a still more real danger is that for the same reasons she may be tempted to manage external politics in the same manner as the one which seems to be succeeding so well in domestic politics—that is, use some existing problem of external relations, or create one if a convenient one is not available at present, and drag it out and stoke it up to conjure up a foreign threat to India. After all a foreign threat, real or imaginary, is so much more potent than any domestic one can be in rallying the country behind 'The Leader.' But it can also be more dangerous in its consequences. It may be difficult enough to keep a tight control on the drama of a domestic crisis, in which all the actors are within India's domestic jurisdiction. But the drama of an external crisis might prove to be a different kettle of fish. It would be tragic if Indian public opinion did not wake up to the dangers of these dramas, which can be more serious than anything a "foreign hand" can throw against us.



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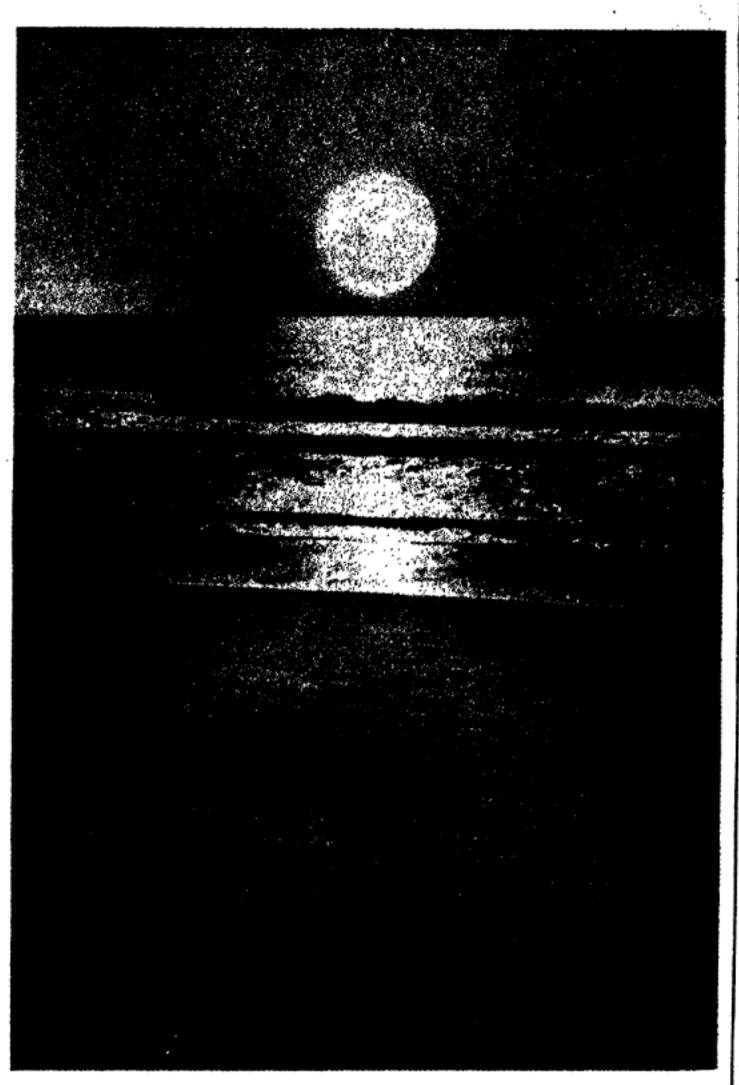
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LOOKING GLASS

Karnataka peasants might agitate



Hegde: problems

When it comes to facing problems the Janata Party chief minister Ramakrishna Hegde seems to have much in common with his Congress(I) predecessor in Karnataka. Both earned public displeasure for demolition drives undertaken by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA). Mr Hegde will also soon have to face the wrath of the farmers. Persis-

tent agitation by farmers was Gundu Rao's nightmare. But the Janata government's warning that they would attach the property of the ryots if dues were not paid by the end of June, will in all possibility cause an uprising, led by the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha. Ironically during Gundu Rao's tenure, the ryots were backed by the Janata Party and this fact was included even in the election manifesto of the party. Naturally farmers are feeling betrayed.

The rise of a MISA detenu

Mr K.K. Murthy, former controversial chairman of the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) who has an amazing ability to go places has now surfaced as chairman and managing director of the Congress (I) backed Karnataka Journals and Publications Pvt. Ltd. which publishes the Times of Deccan, Praja Prabhutva and Chitradeepa. It is a well-known fact that the group is financed by ex-chief minister Gundu Rao and Veerappa Moily, the leader of the Congress (I) Legislature Party. What is the reason for Mr Murthy's hold on the Congress (I) leadership? One speculation is that he knows more than he should have known about the dealings of Gundu Rao and Veerappa Moily, who were in power when Mr Murthy was the BDA chairman. Another more plausible speculation is that he is acting as peace-maker in the Moily-Rao tangle. No small achievement this for Mr Murthy, who was held under MISA during the Emergency.

Kerala dissidents form Socialist Cultural Forum

The Kerala thief minister K. Karonekaran, who is fighting with his back to the wall against forces outside his party will soon have to contend with the mounting dissident power within his party. For the last one year Mi Karunakaran managed to stifle the dissidents but finally, after gathering enough strength they have raised the flag of revolt. The dissidents have only one MLA, Mr Jose Kuttiyani to back them. Unlike in other states, in Kerala the dissidents have formed a Socialist Cultural Forum as a cover for their activities Mr A.A. Kochunni has been elected chairman of the 51-member executive committee of the forum which includes Mr Mullapalli Ramachandran the former Kerala Youth Congress(I) chief who was removed by Mr Karunakaran. As their first statement shows, their grouse stems from a feeling that loyalistshave been neglected in order to win the pleasure of the newly admitted A. K. Anthony and his men.

Maneka Gandhi may soon gain a foothold in Maharashtra

Maneka Gandhi's visit to Vidharbha has created ripples and surprisingly even some Congress(I) leaders have expressed their surprise and envy at the crowds she has been drawing. The latest form of political abuse in Congress(I) circles in Maharashtra is to dub Congress(I) members who do not toe the line as 'Maneka's people'. Recently in Nagpur when the deputy chief minister Ramrao Adik's meeting was continuously interrupted he shouted: "I know you are all Maneka's men." To which the workers later replied: "If he had not been made deputy chief minister he would have been in Maneka's camp." The Congress (S) leader Sharad Pawar, meanwhile has decided to take advantage of Maneka Gandhi's popularity in Vidarbha. He sent his confidante, Datta Meghe, to meet her. Maneka Gandhi, who saw in this just the opportunity to gain a foothold in Maharashtra told Mr Meghe; "My meetings in Vidharbha are four times larger than that of Sharad Pawar's. Why don't we work together?" Sharad Pawar has given the nod and hopes to cash in on her crowd-pulling potential in Vidharbha.

IB sleuths shadow minister's son

The intelligence branch has prepared a fat dossier on a union minister's son simply because someone in the Prime Minister's secretariat thought that he could be a potent threat to Rajiv Gandhi. What alarmed the PM's aides were the links which this minister's son, a Muslim who has been educated abroad, has with one of Mrs Gandhi's bitterest adversaries, H.N. Bahuguna. The IB sleuths were therefore put on his trail to monitor where he went, whom he met and generally what he did. The reports cannot be complementary for the unsuspecting minister's son, for the IB officials were clearly briefed about what the political bosses wanted them to report.

Karunakaran vs RSS

The UDF ministry in Kerala has launched a massive crackdown on the RSS sparking off a battle that will have far-reaching consequences. The chief minister K. Karunakaran has ordered a strict watch on RSS activities. A series of raids wer: conducted recently on RSS offices including its headquarters in Cochin from where the editor and assistant editor of



Karunakaran: determined

the RSS journal Janmabhoomi were arrested. About 100 RSS men were arrested from Cochin alone. Mr Karunakaran's wrath against the RSS in due not only to the tense communal situation in the state but also because he feels that the attempt to prevent him from entering the Guruvayoor temple was RSS-inspired. In a recent interview with Sunday he had said that he would use force if the RSS tries to vitiate the atmosphere in the state. The only factor that will hamper this crusade against the RSS, whose strength has been burgeoning in the state, is the National Democratic Party, a partner of the ministry which has a soft corner for the RSS.

ELECTION COMMISSION

Dual standards?

A change of attitude at the Kashmir polls

New Delhi: The election commission and the National Conference taken divergent views on the Jammu and Kashmir elections from the very day they were announced Normally the poll dates are fixed in consultation with the state government concerned. The Jammu and Kashmir government wanted the elections to be held between 21 and 27 May, and they wanted the old style of a three-day poll to be tol lowed. But the election commission fixed 5 June as the day for the one-day poll

Then, the state government did not want the elections to be held in Leh and Kargil constituencies on 5 June Till 15 June each year, these areas are maccessible by road since all approaches are snowbound. Therefore, the National Conterence wanted the elections in these two seats to be held when they were accessible by road. But the election commission was adamant. Mr Rany Gandhi and other senior Congress(1) leaders were able to visit Leh by air But by going to I eh alone, the cam paign could not be conducted in the interior parts of the constituency A helicopter was a must. So, the National Conference president and chief minister, Dr Faroog Abdullah, requested the union government to allow him the use of Air Force helicopters, on payment, on 31 May and I June The defence ministry turned down the request IAF helicopters. however, were used in the Congress(I) campaign in the state

The election commission, which had maintained a sphynx-like silence during the reports of violence in Assam on the election eve, reacted promptly to press reports on violence in Jammu and Kashmir. Senior election commission officers and union home secretary, T.N. Chaturvedi were rushed to the state to study the law and order situation. The only opposition leader who took note of the election commission's dual standards regarding Assam and Kashmir was the Democratic Socialist Party president, Mi Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna. On 14 May, he wrote to the chief election commissioner, Mr Trivedi, protesting against the deployment of central government officers as election observers in the state. Mr Bahuguna pointed out in his letter that in view of the fact that relations between the National Conference and the Congress(I) were "far from cordial," the appointment of administrative officers posted under the central government as observers was "far from just and tair." He reminded the commission that normally the role of observers should be assigned to the judiciary.

On 31 May, after the union home secretary had gone on record as saying that he had found the law and order situation in the state bad, and after the election commission seemed to agree with the allegations of the Congress(I) leaders regarding the state of attairs in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr Bahuguna agam wrote to the election commission. Howev-

er, the election commission went ahead, relying on the allegations of the Congress(I) and ignoring the state government's reports on the alleged malpractices in the elections. In a reply to Mr Bahuguna's letter, on 3 June, the secretary of the election commission, Dr R. P. Bhalla, in fact, defended the visit to Jammu and Kashmir by the home secretary, Mr Chaturvedi. He also referred to the visit by Mr Chaturvedi to the Garhwal parliamentary constituency in May 1982, when Mr Bahuguna was a candidate. To this Mr Bahuguna retorted by replying to the commission on 9 June, asking it to refer to its records, where it would be found that when Mr Chaturvedi went to Garhwal, following a protest by Mr Bahuguna, the then chief election commissioner, Mr S. L. Shakder, had stated that the home secretary had not been sent by the election commission to Garhwal. Mr Chaturvedi's visit on the election commission's behalf to Kashmir, therefore, Mr Bahuguna felt, showed a change in the attitude of the election commission. Mr Bahuguna told SUNDAY that if the election commission believed that there was violence in Kashmir, then it ought to give the exact figures of the victims of the violence, to the people. In the absence of such data, Mr Bahuguna felt, the allegations were not substantiated, especially as the state government had not confirmed them.

The Congress(1) has alleged largescale rigging in the Valley. Its contention is that while in Assam (where it formed the government) and in Jammu (where it swept the polls), the elections were fair, in Kashmir valley where the Congress(1) was routed, there were malpractices. Such reasoning can come only from a party which has faith in something which certainly does not qualify as "democracy." The Congress(1)'s defeated candidate in the Srinagar Lok Sabha byelection, Mohd Shafi Qureshi and its two ace pollmanagers sent from New Delhi-Mr Arif Mohammad Khan and Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad---have produced ballot papers which they allegedly recovered from National Conference workers. But by some miracle, while these errant National Conference workers were overpowered by the Congress(I) men and the ballot papers snatched from them, the Congress(I) could not produce these workers, hor did it lodge a complaint with the police. Are we to believe that after the ballot papers were seized, the National Conference workers disappeared into thin air? There are too many loopholes in the ballot papers' seizure story, as there are in the Congress(I)'s allegations regarding violence. The election commission ordered

repoll and recounting in many seats



Dr Abdullah campaigning: bitterness caused by the centre

in the Valley without ascertaining the facts from the chief electoral officer of Jammu and Kashmir. It suspended the district returning officer of Doda (an IAS officer), even before holding an enquiry into the allegations against him. And this was done after a central minister, a Congress(I) observer, had assaulted the officer who sustained a head injury.

The election commission derives its power in Jammu and Kashmir, not under the provisions of the Constitution of India but under the constitution of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. If the state Assembly wants to do so, then, by a vote of two-thirds majority, it can take away the powers from the election commission and appoint a separate body in the state. The National Conference is in

1.00 a position to take such a drastic step today. One only hopes that the bitterness created by the acts of the central government, the election commission and the Congress(I) will not drive Dr Faroog Abdullah to such drastic steps. Already there is talk in the Valley that the state Assembly should amend the constitution and revert to the old system of Sadar-E-Riasat and Prime Minister, which prevailed till 1956. The Congress(I)'s sectarianism has pushed Dr Abdullah into the opposition fold in national politics. It is hoped that Dr Farooq Abdullah will not be driven to extreme measures now, but will keep his larger national role in mind.

Shubhabrata Bhattacharya

MEDIA

Sword against the press

Madras: The Tamil Nadu press finds itself at a cul-de-sac in its bid to achieve a measure of freedom. After miming some seemingly democratic norms, chief minister M. G. Ramachandran has now made it very clear that the amended 3ection 292-A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) is here to stay. There is no question of repealing this accursed TN Press Act.

Even more than MGR, the pressmen of Tamil Nadu are guilty of systematically betraying their own cause. The body of journalists in this state is cleaved into equally reprehensible sections—on the one hand are a few trusted lieutenants of the CM masquerading as the consciencekeepers of the press world, and on the other are the slightly conservative pressmen who, unfortunately,

are utterly ineffectual.

It may be recalled that in September 1981, the TN government issued an order amending Section 292-A of the IPC to make scurrilous and obscene writing a cognisable and non-bailable offence. It became the TN Amended Act 13 in 1982. The redoubtable provisions of this Act were invoked on several occasions to put journalists behind bars.; The DMK dailies were the main target of this powerful weapon. One must concede that some of them do publish such scandalous stories that they certainly should not be allowed to go scot-free. But action can be taken against them for defamation under Section 500 IPC; there was no need for an Act that provides ample scope for misuse. But taking recourse to Section 500 is too long-winded and weak for the MGR government which appears to draw its strength from lathis and lock-ups.

Dr Jagannath Mishra, Bihar's CM, had introduced this Act in his home state and thus was born the Bihar

Press Bill. Its fate is now history. The undaunted pressmen of Bihar succeeded in aborting the Bill by waging a relentless battle. In Tamil Nadu, where the ignoble Bill originated, the only repercussion of the Bihar pressmen's agitation was MGR's announcement that a committee comprising press representatives and government officials would be formed to review the Act. A government order No. 2401, dated 17 September, 1982 "Apprehensions have been expressed in this connection that the provisions now amended are unduly harsh and as such as to impinge on the freedom of the press...with a view to going into all aspects of this question in depth and making recommendations to the government, the government constitutes a committee with the minister for information and religious endowments as chairman." The committee was to have eight members, five being government officials belonging to the home and law departments and the other three from the, newspaper industry—one representative of newspaper editors,

MGR: weilding the sword?



THE THE REPORT OF THE PARTY OF one representative of newspaper proprietors and one representative

of working journalists.

While making this magnanimous announcement which appeared to give the impression that the TN government was, at last, buckling to popular dissent, the information minister, Mr R. M. Veerappan, declared at a press conference that the press representatives would be chosen within a week. But nothing happened for almost a month. Finally, on 15 September a government order No. 2580 was issued in which seven members belonging to the press were appointed. They included Mr P. Sivanthi Adithan of Dina Thanthi, Mr R. Krishnamurthy of Dinama*lar*, Mr Valampuri John of *Thai*, Mr T. R. Ramaswamy of Makkal Kural, Mr C. S. Jayaraman of Hindustan Times, Mr V. G. Prasad Rao of Times Of India and Mr G. Chandrasekhar of Indian Express. Although the committee members were requested to submit their recommendations within a month of their appointment, the committee is yet to do so even after nine months. The committee has met only once-on 30 October 1982when most of the members claim to have demanded nothing short of repealing the obnoxious Act. Nothing has happened since. The committee members certainly seem to be guilty of one thing—the perpetuation of a farce.

MGR, characteristically, blurted out in the course of an unscheduled press conference that he would not repeal the Act because the government required a sword to defend itself against the pen. Many of the pressmen present thought it a witty remark; nobody pointed out that what the TN government has, is a

Damocles sword.

Still, MGR's statement caused a furore. If there was no question of repealing the Act, then why have a committee at all. The hollowness of MGR's democratic norms was brought to the fore. Two press members of the committee resigned. As a rejoinder to the CM's declaration, the pressmen on the committee sent a letter to Mr Veerappan seeking, what can only be construed clarification---whether MGR's stand reflects the opinion of the government. Moreover, the letter refers to the "reported" statement of MGR, as if the pressmen were not sure themselves whether MGR had indeed said it or not. This, despite the fact that UNI had creeded the story and the Times of India in its 28 May issue had published a Madras datelined story from its special correspondent regarding this matter. The letter also makes an unnecessary mention of the 1960 Act that was the genesis of the 292-A during the time of the then CM, K. Kamaraj. One can only conclude that there is an insidious attempt to shift the blame form MGR to Kamaraj.

As Mr Veerappan did not bother to

respond to this letter, three more of the pressmen resigned. MGR expressed surprise (it is significant that he was not surprised when two members had resigned earlier) and hoped that they would rejoin as they had not fulfilled the purpose of their appointment. The purpose, as MGR pointed out, was to suggest ways on how the government could tackle scurrilous writing. The focus had been deftly shifted from one contentious plank to another, quite different in essence. To quote the three terms of reference of the committee: the committee will, inter alia (1) Take note of the circumstances under which and the purposes for which Section 292-A of the IPC and CRPC (TN Amendment) Act 13 of 1982 was brought into force (2) Exthe concern apprehensions expressed about the implication of this amendment in the newspaper industry and (3) Make appropriate recommendations to ensure that government can effectively control grossly indecent or scurrilous matter or matter intended for blackmail on the one hand, and at the

same time a suitable environment in which newspapers and periodicals can discharge their legitimate functions properly without fear." So MGR is quite right in saying that the press members have not fulfilled the purpose of their appointment.

It is ironic that more than in TN, MGR's announcement that he would not repeal the Act drew loud protests from journalist federations in Bihar and Delhi. But it is lamentable that even assurance of solidarity by the Bihar and Delhi journalists failed so far to galvanise the local pressmen into any decisive action. It is a dismal state of affairs, with MGR on the one hand suppressing and humiliating the journalists and on the other, the press itself degenerating into a state of somnolence. MGR's stooges in the fourth estate manipulate the press into proestablishment positions, and the rest of the pressmen are either indifferent or feckless. The tragedy here is that the press is unable to mobilise itself.

Anita Pratap

STUDENT ACTIVISTS

The price of helping the tribals

Bombay: Thirteen students belonging to the Vidyarthi Pragati Sanghatana (VPS) and the Andhra Pradesh Radical Students' Union, who went to spend their vacations with the poverty-stricken tribals of Gadchiroli, spent 23 days in police custody instead, and only 12 days with the tribals. This amply illustrates the terror that is spread by the police in this newest of districts in Maharashtra. Sanober Aspandiar, a young

lawyer who went to Sironcha to get the 13 students released on bail of Rs 1,000 each on one charge, said that there were two charges against them under Section 117 and 302. Under Section 117 they were accused of making inflammatory speeches and singing revolutionary songs and under Section 302 they were accused of opening fire on State Reserve Police (SRP)—an incident which had occurred on 18 March 1983. Ms

Women tendu workers: exploited



Aspandiar said the students who subsequently produced proof that they were appearing tor their examinations in Bombay on that date, were released by the magistrate on this count.

The SRP who were, however, frustrated in their two-year attempt to catch Naxalities allegedly operating in the area, found easy scapegoats in the young students who had the same literature that they allegedly found on 18 March from the bags left behind by the persons who, they claimed, had fired on them. The SRP have been constantly needled by the authorities who are on the lookout for Naxalites. The guardian minister for Gadchiroli, Mr Surupsingh Naik who is himself an adivasi and who had been there last month, boasted that if he was there he could have caught the Naxalites in 15 days. The police have even forbidden the singing of "Borukata," an old folksong used by political activists to present socio-economic issues to the people. Anyone who sings such songs is dubbed Naxalite. So far, the police have been fighting a losing battle against the so-called Naxalites as there is tremendous sympathy for them from the exploited people who have benefitted by their help.

Gadhchiroli is one of Maharashtra's newly carved out and primarily tribal districts. It is very rich in natural resources and 70 per cent of the district yields expensive products like tendu leaves, wood and other forest material that is bringing in vast wealth to traders, contractors and the government. But the people of the soil are poor. Official statistics portray Gadchiroli as one of the most backward districts. Most of the people in Sironcha *taluka* live below the poverty line and the literacy rate is only 16.8 per cent. The gonds in Sironcha have two primary means of livelihood—jhuming (cultivation on land cleared in the middle of the forests) and gathering firewood and other raw material from the forest. The government is conniving with traders and contractors to evict the gonds from the forests.

Under the guise of protecting the forests from jhuming, the government's forest officers are literally handing over the forests to the contractors. The gonds are not only deprived of their means of livelihood but they are being turned from owners of the land to labourers or bonded labourers. Beedi and paper manufacturers and contractors are, on the other hand, minting money The government earned over rupees seven crores in 1982-83 by way of revenue. The gond families who depend on picking and bundling the tendu leaves are exploited and underpaid. Last year the government had fixed the wage rate at the starvation level of Rs five per 100 bundles and this year after the gonds

agitated it was increased to Rs 6.40. The labourers have been demanding

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more because in Asaralli district the rate last year was Rs nine per bundle and this year it has increased to Rs 12.50. Across the border in Karimnagar district of Andhra Pradesh, the current rate is Rs 22 as there is a very strong movement there of agricultural labourers.

The tribals in Gadchiroli have only recently, over the last two years, started to organise themselves and the government's reply to their growing struggle for justice has been to unleash the state reserve police (SRP) on them. There are 26 SRP camps in Jamalghata, Repanpally, Amanur, Kamlapur, Somanpath, Sironcha and Aheri, and it is understood that one lakh rupees per day are being spent to maintain them. Each camp has about 50 SRP, which means 1300 armed personnel in the two talukas of Aheri and Sironcha alone.

There is untold harassment of the local people. According to VPS activists, people have narrated to them their experiences about being arrested on the mere suspicion of being Naxalites or of sheltering Naxalites. A young doctor, Prabhakar Borile, who gave an injection to one of the VPS students who had fallen ill, was arrested "for harbouring a Naxalite." The sarpanch of Kotaguddam who owns a lerry service and had agreed to ferry the

students across the river from Sironcha to Andhra Pradesh, was harassed and then let off when he paid a bribe of Rs 800. Others have false cases against them under Section 212 (harbouring criminals) and Section 307 (attempting to murder). In Asaralli there are 106 such cases and in Takda Motta, five cases. In Somanapalli, people complained of police hooliganism in the houses of adivasis.

The VPS and the AP Radical Students Union sent 13 students to stay with the tribals and study their problems, as part of the "go-to-the vil-lage" campaign from 7-21 May. As a concluding event of their campaign, the students had organised a public meeting in Sironcha town on 19 May. After this meeting which was held with police permission, the VPS claims that the police called the students for interrogation and after that, they were not seen. Attempts by lawyers to find their whereabouts for a week met with a blank from the police station. It was only when the lawyers threatened to file a writ of mandamus in the Nagpur High Court, that the police informed them that they had produced the students at a magistrate's court in Aheri as the magistrate of Sironcha was on leave.

Olga Tellis

KARNATAKA

BDA's demolition spree

Bangalore: After surviving the Bhajan Lal-inspired Congress(I) strategy in the initial stages of ministry making; after successfully neutralising the Bangarappa factor on the election battlefield of Kanakapura; just when Janata supporters in Bangalore were beginning to breathe easily, problems loom large again. And speculations are rife that at least one minister in Ramakrishna Hegde's cabinet will be out by the time the current explosive situation is resolved.

The 'problem' in focus is the demolition spree indulged in by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) in the Chickmaranahalli area of Bangalore north taluk (where structures have been deemed as irregular). Although critics of the BDA and the higher authorities involved admit that the constructions in question were irregular and illegal, they are, nonetheless, fierce in their criticism of the manner of execution and the timing of the order. Understandably, the affected residents of the 50 demolished houses have been angry with the government, but what has affected the government more is the strident criticism by the Janata ministry's allies in the Assembly—the Bharativa

Janata Party (BJP) and the two communist parties. Hardly ten days after the first structure was bulldozed there were even signs of a further conflict on this matter within the Janata Party itself.

This latest problem, technically, began on 28 May when the BDA bulldozers crashed into the Chickamaranahalli area and destroyed the alleged illegal structures, estimated to cost less than a lakh rupees each. That day both the chief minister, Mr R. K. Hegde and municipal administration minister, Mr M. Chandrashekar were out of town. Perhaps too stunned to react, the residents stood around helpless, unable to do anything to stop the demolitions. But the next day shock gave way to anger and an irate mob, mainly comprising residents, set fire to the immediate objects of rage—the bulldozers. Realising that the situation was getting out of control, CM Hegde, then in New Delhi, telephonically ordered a temporary suspension of demolition work. Information minister M. Raghupathy rushed to the spot and apologised to the people assuring them that the government would take immediate action to correct any injustice perpetrated in the area.

While this temporary stay and impromptu apology appeased the residents, and took considerable punch out of the agitations that the opposition groups had attempted to organise, the problems did not end there. An outraged Chandrashekar, upset that one of his colleagues had openly undermined his authority, promptly tried to cancel the apology, saying that the demolitions were justified. This has since drawn much fire against him by both the opposition and the Janata men who recall that when an earlier BDA chief under Gundu Rao had ordered similar demolitions, it was Chandrashekur who had been most vociferous in his criticism against the Rao government. They also say that Chandrashekar, along with Justice V L. Krishna Iyer, T. R. Shamanna, MP and Dr H. L. Thimme Gowda, had been largely instrumental in regular-



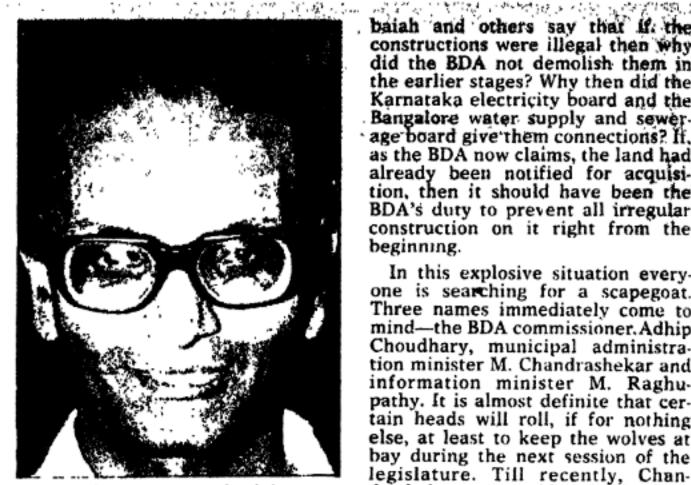


ising around 20,000 similarly irregular constructions in the southern

extensions of the city.

The demolitions have also created fissures between the Janata Party and its alliance partners. The communists condemned the demolitions as an "inhuman act" and the BJP has issued a warning to the government that it would not rest until the victims are compensated and rehabilitated. In fact, the BJP is insisting that everyone should be given at least low cost housing at government cost in the same area. Even before his party formally lodged its complaint, BJP state chief A. K. Subbarah addressed a meeting in the area where he warned the government that his party would withdraw its support of the Hegde government if this situation was not resolved. A demand was also made by BJP's leader in the house, Mr V. S. Acharya, that the government publish a white paper on BDA affairs in general, with particular reference to the demolitions. He has emphasised that if, in the white paper, certain adverse facts emerge regarding cither the BDA top officials or the minister, the BJP would not hesitate to demand his dismissal or removal.

In examining the affairs of the BDA the government is likely to be opening a Pandora's box, the Vidhan Soudha watchers opine. Part of the reason why seasoned legislators like Mr Subbaiah are rallying against the



Chandrashekar, outraged minister

government's action, is because of the mess that the BDA has been in over the years. BDA commissioner Adhip Choudhary's argument is that the demolitions were necessary because the land on which the houses had been constructed, had earlier been notified by the BDA for acquisition and because the BDA was committed to provide the land to other people who had already put down money for the sites. However Sub-

baiah and others say that if the constructions were illegal then why did the BDA not demolish them in the earlier stages? Why then did the Karnataka electricity board and the Bangalore water supply and sewerage board give them connections? If, as the BDA now claims, the land had already been notified for acquisition, then it should have been the BDA's duty to prevent all irregular construction on it right from the beginning.

In this explosive situation everyone is searching for a scapegoat. Three names immediately come to mind—the BDA commissioner. Adhip Choudhary, municipal administration minister M. Chandrashekar and information minister M. Raghupathy. It is almost definite that certain heads will roll, if for nothing else, at least to keep the wolves at bay during the next session of the legislature. Till recently, Chandrashekar was considered to be difficult to touch because of the backing of PWD minister, Mr H. D. Deve Gowda (they belong to the same vokkaliga community). It was said that in the early months of the ministry Mr Hegde needed Deve Gowda's help to combat the Bangarappa factor. With Bangarappa's influence almost non-existent now, Mr Hegde can afford to be tough with Deve Gowda.

Louise Fernandes

A passenger's experience on IA Flight 106

Bombay: I was a passenger on IA Flight 106 from Bangalore to Bombay. This is a detailed account of what exactly happened on 6 May 1983.

This airbus comes from Bombay to Bangalore as Flight 105 and then after refuelling, returns to Bombay as Flight 106. This Flight normally takes off from Bangalore at 9 15 am, but due to the engineers' strike in Bombay, the Indian Airlines had rescheduled all their flights which touched Bombay. According to the new schedule, therefore, Flight 106 would be leaving Bangalore at 12.35 pm. I arrived at the Bangalore airport at 11.30 am The information board read that the expected time of arrival (ETA) of Flight 105 was 12 35 pm and the expected time of departure (ETD) of Flight 106 was 1 15 pm. I checked in my baggage, checked through security and awaited the departure call. The call was announced at 1.15 pm. We boarded the airbus and waited for the take-off. It was a full flight and it was extremely hot and suffocating in the aircraft. The airconditioners cannot be switched on till after the take-off which was at 1.45 pm—exactly half an hour after we had boarded the plane.

Even as the captain instructed his crew to "Arm all doors for take off." from my seat at the rear-end of the aircraft, I could see total panic spreading in the front half of the

plane. Seat belts were being rapidly unfastened and overhead lockers were being opened to retrieve baggage. A few women with babies in their arms even started screaming. Smoke was emanating from the front portion and people were beginning to cough. The passengers heard a voice over the microphone saying: "Please be calm." Nothing more. None of the crew members even bothered to pacify the panic-stricken passengers who were getting even more terrified as the ladder was not ready for disembarking. Finally, the ladder did arrive and we got out and went back to the airport terminal. On asked what was happening, the only reply the information desk could give, was: "We have no information as yet." It was only half an hour later that they announced that the ETD of Flight 106 was 3.30 pm. No explanations. No apologies.

At 3.00 pm it was announced that the snack trays were being off-loaded and snacks would be served in the restaurant. At 4.00 pm tea was announced but there was still no mention of the flight departure. It was an endless wait. At 5.40 pm, it was announced with great urgency that Flight 106 would take off at 6.00 pm but fresh boarding passes were to be collected. The same seats were given,

and once again we had to go through security and into the aircraft.

The flight took off at 6.20 pm and there were some empty seats this time. Through the entire journey of an hour and 20 minutes, the captain flew the aircraft so low that the airconditioner could not be switched on It was tremendously hot and stuffy inside the aircraft and the cabin pressure was uncomfortably low. Babies cried throughout the flight as their ears were getting blocked. Only water was served on that flight and the crew was seated for most of the

Was that aircraft in any condition to fly? There were rumours afloat that only someone from Bombay could repair it, but that would mean putting up all the passengers in a hotel for the night. Did Indian Airlines try to avoid this expense at the risk of their passengers' lives? It was a traumatic experience and I have vowed never to travel on the same aircraft once I have been asked to disembark because of technical problems, I will never forget the face of the woman passenger at the information desk when she demanded the refund for her ticket and refused to board the same aircraft. I wish I had done the same.

Shivani Jhaveri

Spirited anti-MGR leposition

ladras: Retired Tamil Nadu inspector general of police, ir R.N. Manickam seems to have a flair for dropping ombshells. It was he who had filed an explosive ffidavit before the inquiry commission appointed by the TN government to probe into the irregularities ommitted by CM MGR and revenue minister S.D. omasundaram in the issue of liquor licences.

In his affidavit, Manickam had declared that his on-in-law Shanmugam, his brother Sundaramoorthy nd the latter's friend, Mr Ravindranath, had given Rs 0.75 lakhs as 'commission' to MGR's brother, M.G. hakrapani and his two sons, Balan and Sukumaran for ecuring the liquor licences. It was alleged that the loney had been handed over to law minister C. onaivan and harijan welfare minister S. Vijayasarathy ho served as conduits to reach the CM. Now once again, lanickam has come up with a controversial declaration. Thile deposing before the commission, he revealed that

'Madras party' had contacted him, urging him to frain from deposing before the commission. In the leeting arranged by Mr Ramaswamy Udayar of Madras, n offer was made to Manickam that the entire amount Rs 10.75 lakhs would be returned with interest, along ith court fees and other sundry expenses, provided he id not depose before the commission. According to lanickam, he was required to apologise for filing the ifidavit that was based on incorrect information. Said lanickam while deposing before the commission: "I ent through the draft and rejected it outright. The

eeting ended abruptly."

An interesting development in the hearing was the cusation levelled by the counsel for Mr Ponnaiyan, Mr K. Venugopal, who charged that Manickam was deposig at the instigation of the DMK party. He went to the stent of charging that the DMK had compensated lanickam in full by giving Rs 10.75 lakhs so as to entice in to depose before the commission. But in highlightig the role of the DMK in Manickam's deposition, the ounsel for MGR, Mr T. R. Arunachalam, appears to ave put his foot in his mouth. While trying to establish alliance between Manickam and the DMK, Mr tunachalam in his cross-examination got Mr Manickam agree that he had met DMK MP, Murasoli Maran ditor of the DMK daily, Murasoli), and Mr Srinivasan India Cements, who, reportedly, is a sympathiser of te DMK. Mr Manickam conceded that the two persons ad dropped in at his hotel and that he had met them for vo hours because they were his friends. He described leir visit as a "social call."

But DMK counsel N. Natarajan seized the opportunity rub salt into MGR's wounds. He immediately charged int Mr Manickam was being kept under surveillance 1d "tailed like a common criminal." He also stated that police machinery was being misused." This allegation, ming as it does after the nationwide protest against olice surveillance of High Court judges in Tamil Nadu, icensed MGR. It is learnt that the CM was really angry ith counsel Arunachalam for providing the opposition stick to beat him with. Arunachalam was promptly ven the marching orders and replaced by Mr Ram thmalani. The trend of the commission hearing indites that counsels for MGR, Ponnaiyan and Vijayasarthy and the other liquor barons who were sanctioned tences in June 1981 are trying to establish that the ansaction of Rs 10.75 lakhs had been made not for quor but for a film business.

nita Pratap

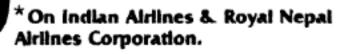


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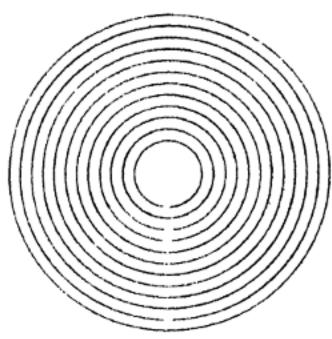
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Moire patterns



"Moire" is a French word for "water." In English it is most frequently heard in the term, "moire" silk, a fabric that has a shimmering appearance resembling the reflections on the surface of a pool of water. You just have to take a nylon cloth, fold it and see through it to observe a wonderful pattern.

Similarly, you can draw two sets of equally spaced parallel lines on two transparent sheets with the help of magic markers and hold one over the other at a small angle and see small changes in the spacing of the moire fringes. You can make another simple moire pattern by preparing two transparent sheets of equally spaced

Spot what's wrong



Can you make out what is wrong with this picture?

parallel lines when the spacing of one set differs from that of another. Yet another beautiful moire can be based on circles. Drawing identical sets of somewhat thick circles on two transparent sheets while increasing the radius at regular intervals, put one sheet over the other. As the two sets of overlapping circles are moved apart you see a number of radiating moire bars. These bars duplicate the interference pattern produced when light waves from a common source pass through two pinholes. You can try several other designs well.

A moire pattern can be regarded as the mathematical solution to the interference of two periodic functions. It can be used to study the structure of crystals, interference phenomena and defects of lenses. Moire patterns have served many other interesting applications also.

Do you know?

DDT may be a killer for most winged creatures but it certainly isn't for a particular kind of bee

A team of American and Brazilian scientists have discovered that the males of the species, Eufreesia purpurata, swarm into houses sprayed with DDT which they promptly eat and survive.

Figure this out

Question

An army of infantrymen arranged in a rectangular formation one km long start marching at a uniform speed towards the north. A sergeant on horseback starts at the same time from the rear of the formation riding at thrice the speed of the army, also towards north. On reaching the head of the formation the sergeant at once turns round and rides towards the south until he reaches the rear of the formation. What is the total distance covered by the sergeant?

Answer

Living fossil



The maidenhair-tree (Gingko Biloba) is the sole survivor of an ancient group of plants belonging to the species, Cymnosperms Gingko, and, unlike any other living plant, has existed unchanged since the late Triassic or early Jurassic period. Its long span of existence—some 150 million years—has, in fact, earned it the name of a living fossil.

The survival of the maidenhair-tree which has a life span of 1,000 years or more has not remained a mystery—during the Permian period many areas became increasingly cold, glaciers formed, and deserts appeared but some parts of the world remained swampy and moist such as China where the Gingko Biloba continued to survive. It also managed to withstand human destruction because of Buddhist priests who cultivated it in the temple gardens of China and Japan.

SCIENCE NOTES

SCIENTISTS have now found a body chemical that will hasten the healing of wounds. The substance is known as angiogenesis (which literally means blood vessel growth) and was discovered from the fluid of rabbit wounds. It was purified in a laboratory and it has also been put to use in experiments on rabbits, meeting with a great deal of success. The next step now is to extract and purify the human angiogenesis factor. It is expected that the new found chemical will prove to be a boon in thespeedy healing of skin grafts, burns and other injuries. You could thus expect a day soon enough now, when all those scraped elbows and lacerated knees from the games field need not take long weeks to heal quickly and cleanly.

OTHE SUNDAY VARIETY SECTION

Khaas Baat

The world's "youngest and fastest" director, Sheetal, is busy planning her second film. Her latest love, Sarfraz Nawaz, is away with the Pakistani squad playing the world cup cricket tournament in England and this is the only time she can concentrate on her work. Sheetal's romance with the mercurial Pakistani fast bowler is the latest in a long list of affairs. In fact, she misses no opportunity to exclaim how a "tall handsome man" fell for her at "first sight." At one point of time she had described herself as the woman in Amitabh Bachchan's life.

Part of the filmi firmament for long, Sheetal shot into the limelight when she described herself as the heroine and Raakhee as the 'other woman' in Hrishikesh Mukherjee's Amitabh starrer Bemisal A little later, the income tax raid on the film indus-

try found Sheetal back in the news. Every report on the incident stated that Sheetal was found closeted with a few suspicious looking Arabs when the tax people called on her. Her latest claim of fame is her producing, directing, editing, scripting and acting in her first home production: Honey. Before the publicity blitz on Honey could die down, Sheetal was in the arms of Sarfraz Nawaz.

The two apparently first met at a film party at the hotel where a few Pakistani cricketers were staying. That was when the famous love at first sight took place. However, what set tongues wagging was Sarfraz quietly shifting to a hotel in Bombay's film colony: Juhu. According to one statement by Sheetal this was because she lived in Juhu and both wanted to be near each other at all times. The romance finally became public when Sheetal took Sarfraz to the famous *Raj Kapoor* holi

party. Apparently matters



Reena Roy: marriage plans

were thick enough for Sarfraz willingly agreed to pose in a tight clutch with his honey.

According to industry sources, Sarfraz is the first real star struck cricketer they have seen in a long time. "It had always been the other way round," said one publicist.

t the other end of the ∠ spectrum, Sarfraz's teammate Mohsin Khan has been romantically linked with leading lady Reena Roy. Although she was not available for comment—there are reports that she is holidaying in America—Reena Roy is on record that she had never heard the name before. nor had she seen the Khan. Even industry sources tend to describe Reena's link-up with Mohsin as "weak and unconvincing." According to them experience has taught her a bitter lesson and that she would never, never go for a light-hearted fling. The actress has stopped signing films and is reported to be preparing for marriage to someone "at the other end of the world." That someone is certainly not a cricketer.

Shabana Azmi is tired of denying those rumours but she still wants to do it. No, she is not marrying writer Javed Akhtar. He is just a "fantastic friend for all seasons." She is not playing Mrs Indira Gandhi in any film and would not play her even if she was offered the chance and she is not joining politics.

It is strange how success Lmakes people change their attitudes, their way of looking at people and things. Take Dilip Kumar, tili just two years ago they were content with making him a legend and the greatest actor but very rarely did anyone think of offering him a role. It took Dilip just two films Shakti and Vidhaata to win all hearts. This time even the new generation which was hardly aware of his contribution to the field of acting in India, also agreed that he was a great actor. The impact of his work was so great that people even forgot and forgave him the greatest blunder he made in his life--his secret marriage with Asma which sparked off a national debate. Now it is only Dilip Kumar, the actor who matters. There are three of his films on the floor (Mazdoor, Mashaal and Duniya). And within the next two months there are at least six big films to start. Most of them in the south. Something like this has never happened in the forty year career of Dilip Kumar.

Dilip Kumar: great days



Unlucky Bharathi
Raaja. In the south he
is still one of the good
directors. His films are
eagerly awaited. They
even win a series of
awards. But in Bombay
where the only thing that
matters is how much
money jingles at the box
office, Bharathi Raaja has
been declared a failure.
He has proved unlucky every time he has tried a
Hindi film.

Sheetal in Sarfraz's arms: young and fast





Sunday week

Beginning 26 June

By AMRITLAL



ARJES (15 April-14 May) This is a lucky week for all of you financially. At the same time be wary of your colleagues. Your success

is likely to arouse their jealousy and hostility. So, be tactful and patient. Artistes and intellectuals will be rewarded. On the home front there will be peace and happiness. Affairs of the heart will progress at a fast pace.

Good dates 26, 27 and 28 Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 8. Favourable direction: North-west



TAURUS (15 May-14 June) This will be a hectic week for you You will be busy reaping the gains from past efforts On the other hand,

you may encounter some financial difficulties, so be wary of launching any new enterprises. Also do not spend more than you have to Avoid arguments. An unexpected visit from a near relative is forecast this week. On the domestic front be cautious.

Good dates: 27,29 and 30 Lucky numbers: 1, 4 and 7. Favourable direction: South.

GEMINI (15 June---14 July) This is a favourable week for love and marriage. If Yyou do not gamble or take ☑risks this will be a good week for you. Political involvements may create some problems. A major incident may leave an impact on your mind. An

untoward happening may prevent you from undertaking a journey you have had in mind.

Good dates: 30, 1 and 2. Lucky numbers: 5, 6 and 7. Favourable direction: East.



_CANCER (15 July---14 August) This will not be a favourable week for ro-Amance or domestic harmony. However, do not

lose heart. You have enough will-power to see you through any crises. You may have financial problems but you will be able to pull yourself out of them. You may strike a new friendship with a member of the opposite sex this week. Your health will improve as well.

Good dates: 27, 29 and 1. Lucky numbers: 1, 2 and 3 Favourable direction: North-east.

LEO (15 August—14 September) Financially, this will not be a good week for you. So n a word of advice: avoid ambling or speculation. If plans and schemes you have in mind do not work out, do not be disheartened, as your bad times are almost over and matters will soon improve. All the same there may be cause for anxiety regarding

the marriage of someone close to you. Good dates: 26, 28 and 2. Lucky numbers: 7.8.9.

Favourable direction: South-east.



VIRGO (15 September—14 October) This is going to be a lucky week for sportsmen. A long journey may be in store for you

Businessmen, you are advised not to plan or execute new ventures this week. A word of caution: your health as well as that of a family member may cause some problems. Also, do not antagonise your employers or those in authority. Avoid extravagance.

Good dates: 26, 29 and 30. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 6. Favourable direction: North.



WZ LIBRA (15 October—14 November) This will be a favourable week for businessmen. However, a new friendship may prove

harmful to your interests. Those in service, look forward to a promotion Sportsmen, you may win new honours this week. Friends and relatives will cooperate and contribute to your success. Young people, this will be a good time.

Good dates: 28, 29 and 1 Lucky number: 3, 7 and 8. Favourable direction: West.



SCORPIO (15 November---14 December) Pay great attention to business and other professional pursuits this week. But if you do not gain

financially, do not let it disbearten you. Go ahead with any business ventures you have this week. Be careful of the health of your children. Relatives and friends will be around to share your fortunes, and your spouse may contribute to your happiness.

Good dates: 26, 28 and Lucky numbers: 4, 5 and 6. Favourable direction: South-west.

SAGITTARIUS (15 December-14 January) This week creative people will gain 3 recognition. This will be a FO week of steady to rapid

progress. You will gain through property matters or insurance policies. Your intuition will guide you, especially in matters of the heart. New friends are likely to give you inspiration. A journey may be in store for you: it may profit you in the long run.

Good dates: 26, 27 and 2. Lucky numbers: 3, 4 and 5. Favourable direction: North.



CAPRICORN (15 January---14 1 February) This will be a good week for you finan-E cially as long as you can ∠ check extravagance. You

will be able to contact influential people this week. Your elders will help you and your domestic front will be calm. For those of you who are going to get married, there might be disharmony in the negotiations but do not lose heart. Take care of your health this week.

Good dates: 27, 28 and 1 Lucky numbers: 1, 5 and 9 Favourable direction: East.



AQUARIUS (15 February—14 March) This week conserve your energies and be very tactful, and you will win over people who matter to

you Leave things to your intuition and matters will sort themselves out. Though your domestic front will be peaceful, you may have some problems with your spouse. A word of caution to you all: do not make hasty decisions

Good dates: 29, 30 and 1. Lucky numbers: 2, 4 and 6. Favourable direction: West



PISCES (15 March-14 April) This is a week of mixed fortunes for you. Your domestic front will be a

source of joy, but speculation will not yield favourable results. Also, a love affair may come to a sudden end. Avoid getting into disputes with friends and relatives. Watch your health Profes-

However, your expenses will increase in proportion to your financial gain. Good dates: 26, 30 and 2. Lucky numbers: 3, 5 and 8.

Favourable direction: South-east.

sionals, the time is favourable for you.

For those whose names being with A, M or Y: You have a fertile. ingenious mind, budding with ideas. You are bold. As such you are never shy or retring.

However, you have difficulty in decision-making: you are never ready to sacrifice certain ideas you hold. Consequently, sometimes you bungle jobs on occasions. You are extremely independent and resent criticism. You are apt to be aggressive and can be very truculent at times. Pride, arrogance and a quarrelsome nature may get you into trouble. So, take heed while there is still time.

After the pain and pleasure of a morning jog, Staminade

puts back what sweat

takes out: your vital body salts.

Sweating and vital body salts

Every time you exercise, you sweat and lose vital body salts The symptoms? A dry

throat, thirst, 'heavy' legs, general fatigue. You're probably so used to these symptoms that you accept them as part of the exercise. They're not. And in extreme cases, the symptoms can be

more severe cramps, nausea, even unconsciousness

How vital are point and vital body salts?

These salts are made up of sodium, potassium, chloride, citrate and magnesium And each of them plays a vital role in your body chemistry

They keep your reflexes sharp, your muscles in tone, maintain your fluid balance, and convert carbohydrates into energy.

Water alone doesn't help

Thirst is caused not just by water loss, but also by loss of vital body salts. Drinking glass after glass of water does not quench your thirst or relieve the other symptoms of dehydration in fact, too much water only dilutes whatever salts are left. Your body machinery does replace vital salts from your food. But that is a very slow process.

Staminade is vital body salts

body, left to itself, would take hours to achieve It relieves dehydration and restores your energy, by replacing body fluids and vital body salts. What does Staminade contain? It's a formulation of all your vital body salts, reinforced with glucose with no artificial stimulants.

Yes, it does taste good

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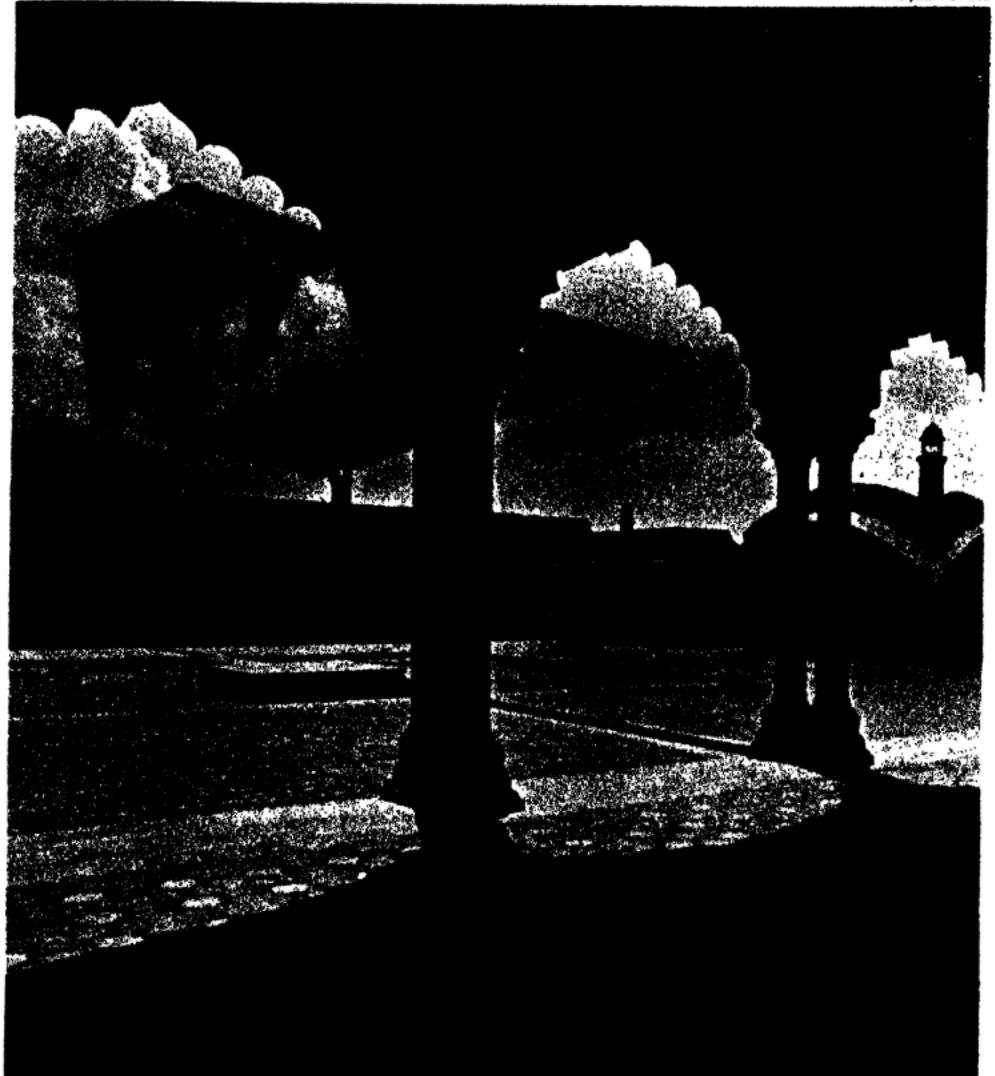
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PIA ک

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This Andia



AMRAVATI: A bridegroom who had travelled all the way from Nagpur to Amravati for his marriage which was to be solemnised had to return empty handed. It is gathered that Mr. Sudhir Satpal was to get married to Sunada Jade at the Jijamata Mangal Karyalay here at Kiron Nagar. The bridegroom had to return with a heavy heart as his would-be wife eloped with her boyfriend on the morning of the wedding. It is learnt that the wife was in love with one Anil Jarjan and they had an affair. This was brought to the notice of her parents. The parents were sore over the affair, and as such decided to marry their daughter at the earliest, but the girl had other intentions. When everything was going smoothly, the girl took Rs 3000 on the penultimate day of her marriage and when everyone was fast asleep, she eloped with her boyfriend at 4 a m in the morning. However, police are in search of the decamped lovers-Hitavada (A. Ramesh Chander, Hyderabad)

AURANGABAD: A village in this district takes pride in its infamous name 'Chor Vagal (village of thieves)'. Would they not want to change the name of their village? Sarpanch Sarangohar Patel, in reply to this question, said, "We are proud of this name because of the rare feat of robbing the king of his elephant accomplished in all abandonment by our ancestors."—Indian Express (Vikas Gudsoorkar, Hyderabad)

JAIPUR: A peon in a beedi factory at Channapatna town of Bangalore district has won the first prize of Rs 61 lakhs of the 83rd super hit bumper draw of the Rajasthan state lottery. Mr Revanna, 38, arrived here to claim the prize money, told newsmen that he had been purchasing lottery tickets for the last 18 years. "I had always wished for

a Rs 50,000 prize so that I could buy a house, but I never expected to win Rs 61 lakhs." —The Times of India (Sanjeev Narang, New Delhi)

BOMBAY: Mr Jayant had applied to the Bombay telephones for a telephones connection. The instrument is yet to be installed, but his name and number are listed in the latest telephone directory. Not only this, he has received a bill for Rs 853 for the period 31 December 1982-May 1983— Hindustan Times (M.E.H. Haider, Gaya)

BHOPAL: Ratanial, who took to begging for want of work, is now a skilled music bandmaster, thanks to the integrated rural development programme. He has also earned a name in his field. TheRural Development Agency which oversees the implementation of the integrated rural development programme, has opened the avenues for self-employment opportunities. Mr Ratanlal, 32, was forced to join a band party as his father had to support a large family with their meagre income coming from only four bighas of land. A progressive cultivator of Navakheda secured a bank loan and Government grant to Ratanial through the district rural development agency to raise his own music band party. With increasing demand for his band group in marriages and other festivities, the economic condition of Ratanlal improved. Now Ratanial has a family with three, sons — Hindustan Times (Amarjeet' Singh Bhatia, Mussoorie)

MADRAS: The body of a man was: shuttled back and forth at the general hospital mortuary, Madras, as his two wives waged a battle to take charge of it. The body of Swaminathan (59), a retired state government driver was lying there in the evening as police efforts to bring about a truce failed. The man died at his third wife's house. Following a complaint of foul play by his first wife, the body was taken to the hospital, where after autopsy, it was handed over to the third wife. This set the first wife on the warpath and as the mortuary van began to move, the two women flexed their muscles, tugged at each other's hair and called each other names, attracting a nuge crowd. Then, together with their relatives, they threw themselves in front of the van, preventing it from moving. The police finally found an amicable solution to the dispute and the body was buried at the Krishnampet burial ground with police escort. The police brought about a settlement of the dispute between the wives by suggesting that five representatives of each of the women could attend the burial. They also solved the question of the burial ground whose choice received mutual consent—Hindu (S Harihasubramaniam, Madras)

Without Comment

The world is too integrated to permit segmentation. Some countries cannot continue to prosper, ignoring stagnation in others—Mrs Gandhi, while delivering the second Raul Prebisch lecture at Belgrade

I will fight them (the Congress-I) in the streets and all corners of the country—Farooq Abdullah



We must remember that we have been winning elections as long as the opposition was divided— Vasantrao Patil, Maharashtra CM

I am not an advocate of anyone; nor a stooge of the government— Sant Bhindranwale in Blitz

Cartoons tell the story of India's political standards better than words—Nayantara Sahgal in Statesman

Our country is so diverse that ambitious politicians can hope to enlist some support in some regions by pandering to regional passions—K. Karunakaran in Indian Express magazine

I am not an extreme person and I am not extreme now—Margaret Thatcher, newly re-elected British PM, pledging not to pursue extreme right wing policies

I'd like to be everywhere where the Pope is, just as a private person—Lech Walesa, on the question of his meeting the Pope during the latter's visit to Poland

Russia feels Pakistan is interfering; we are saying that while your intervention is visible, you are just speculating about Pakistan's interference—Zia-ul Haq in Far Eastern Economic Review

There's just one thing I'd miss if I had to live away from the city (Bombay). Bhelpuri—Salim Ali, noted ornithologist, in Bombay



BLACK GOLD by Goscinny and Uderzo

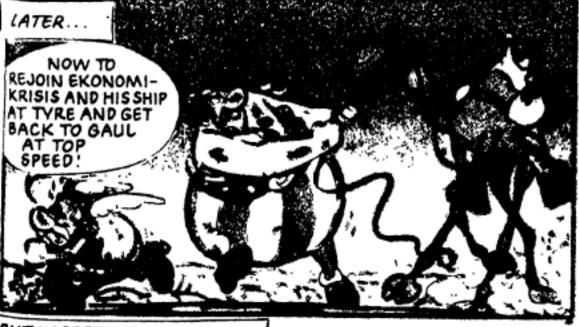












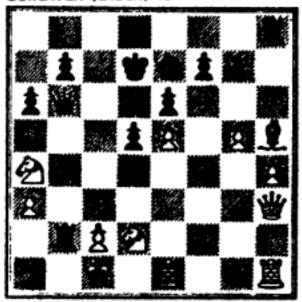






Chess

Seirawan (Black) to move



Hort (White)

The last five years have seen the renaissance of the Caro-Kan, a defence which until recently had always been branded as rather dull and insipid. Under the joint, if rather diverse, influences of players such as Karpov, Larsen and Seirawan, though, new paths have been opened up which the rest of the chess world has been only too eager to follow. Conspicuous by their absence from this new swell of enthusiasm have

been any new books on the Caro, perticularly on the main lines with 4 . . . B-B4 where most of the attention has been concentrated.

In this respect Play the Caro-Kan, by E. Varnusz (Pergamon Press, £6.95), is a welcome arrival on the market. Well thought out and clearly presented, it is a good basic book on the Caro-Kan, with but one reservation: it is obsolete. Any openings book is inevitably about 12 months out of date on publication because of the time-lag between colleting the material and distributing the finished product, but there are acceptable limits. The question arises whether a book published in 1983 with 56 (very good) illustrative games, none of which was played later than 1977, is acceptable in that sense. The book was originally published in Hungary in 1981.

The tragedy is that any comment on the new wave of ideas and variations is lost, as in the following game which leads an undeservedly lonely existence on the cover of the book, having through no fault of its own postdated the writing of the text itself.

White: Hort Black, Seirawan Bad Kissingen 1981 1 P-K4 P-QB3 2 P-Q4 P-Q4

3 P-K5 B-B4 4 N-QB3 P-K3 5 P-KN4 B-N3 6 KN-K2 P-QB4

Subsequent games showed the continuation 7 B-K3 N-QB3 8 PxP! NxP 9 N-Q4 to be much more dangerous for Black PxP 8 KNxP P-KR4

9 B-N5+ N-Q2 10 B-N5 B-K2 11 P-84

Despite White's apparent lead in develor ment, Black's better pawn structure sor begins to tell.

12 QxP PxP BxB 13 BPxB B-R4 14 Q+R3 N-K2 15 K-Q2

An ugly move, but he cannot castle ion and is understandably reluctant to casti : king's side.

16 QR-K1 Q-N3 R-QB1 15 N-N3 P-OR3 18 BxN+ KxB 20 N-Q2 R-QN 19 K-B1 R-B5 21 P--QR3

Hoping to ensuare the rook, also his pla misfires.

RxNP 22 N-R4

DIAGRAM 22 ... RxP+ 23 KxR 24 N-B3 P-Q5 25 R-QN1 26 R-N3 N-Q4 27 N-N1 B-N5!! A deft stroke overloading Black's quer. which must defend both QB3 and KR1 (274 28 Q-N3 N-K6+ wins the rook in the

comed P-R4 28 Q-R2 PxN 29 K-81 31 P-R4 P-87 30 R-B1 B-B4

32 N-R3 QxP 33 RxP+ 34 RxB but White resigned without waiting for $34 \dots QxN+$.

MICHAEL STEAN

Double voids seem to be a speciality of Canadian bridge. At least three have been reported from a recent championship, of which this was the most dramatic.

Dealer North Game all \$ 10 6 3 10986 A 5 3 ▲ A J 5 2 KQ9874 98642 9763 KQJ107 A K Q J 7 4 2 📤 K Q J 10 8 2

In one of the few matches where there was no swing, the bidding went at one table:

| SOUTH | WEST | NOBTH . | EAST |
|--------|--------|---------|------|
| Silver | Kokish | Litvack | Nagy |
| | | No | 1. |
| 6♥ | 6♠ | dble | No |
| 7♥ | No | No | dble |
| No | No | No | |

East hoped his double would be in-

terpreted as Lightner, inviting a club lead, but West led a diamond; much the same at the other table, 2470 to North-South.

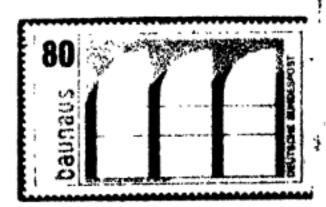
In another match the rugged Canadians, Pomykaiski and Gartaganis, were East-West and the bidding went:

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|--------|------|-------|------|
| | | No | Not |
| 24 | No | 2NT | Not |
| 3♥ | No | 4. | Not |
| 7. | No | 7₩ | dble |
| radbla | No | No | No |

This time West led a club, for 400. His team-mates made Six Hearts doubled, 1660 and a swing of 19 IMPs.

One pair lost 1860, defending against Six Hearts doubled, made with an overtrick. But they gained 12 points, as their team-mates registered 2470 in Seven Hearts doubled.

Finally, the quartet of Carruthers-Guoba, Molson-Baron, lost 1660 when defending against Six Spades doubled and 2470 when defending against Seven Hearts doubled. That was 24 points, off the board of the IMP scale, which grows weary at



Three new stamps from West Germany mark the centenary of the birth of Walter Gropius, the architect who founded the Bauhaus at Weimar in 1919. Noted for it promotion of abstract art and of funr ' tionalism in architecture, the Bauhaus revo lutionised interior and industrial design

The 80-pfennigs stamp (above, reduce from 56mm) shows the Gropius design file skylights at the Bauhaus Museum, Berlir

TERENCE REESE

C. W. HILL

QUESTIONS

 Which two countries does the MacMaon line divide?

Two famous European soldiers, later wopose each other in a famous battle. were both born in the same year. Who were bey?

3. How pany feet are there in a fathom?

Among the Presidents of the USA, there was a father and a son. Who were they?

5. What is the scientific name for the study of beauty?

6. What is a group of crows called?

Which country is known as the "land of Morning Calm"?

8. To which state does Pondicherry belong?

9. What is demography?

6 Study of population and society No state, it is an union territory Korea. 19D1UM A

Alology. hn Adams and John Quincy Adams. JOST XIC

.noten 1 poleon Bonaparte and the Duke of

dia and China. MEBS

PEANUTS "Good of of the by scauze

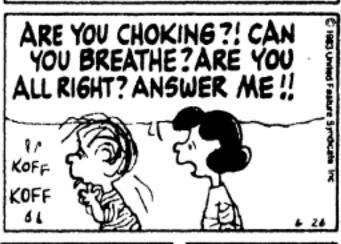


















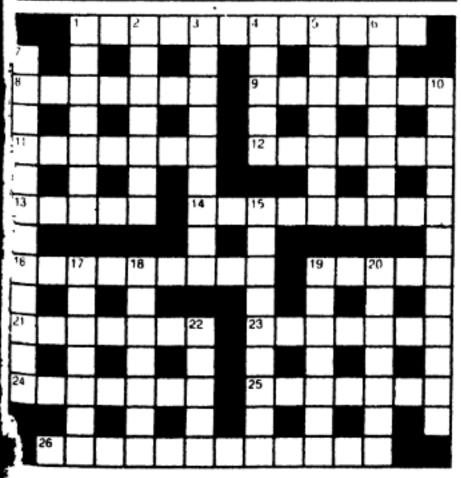






Sunday. crossword

No. 10



220F

defied all royal aid, according to nursery rhyme (6, 6) possible pale when her name is mentioned? (7) our U.S.A. in a fix—how difficult! (7)

kilts could only be re-fashioned to take these sports usasts uphill (3, 4)

Pass confused in Adam's mate—not straightforward. (7) inger scrambles into an African rivei (5)

- 14 Do only youngsters employ this method of addition? (7.2)
- 16 Our forces when confused number eighty (9)
- 19 Article follows what has gone before to find Italian dish (5)
- 21 Acquaints -- not only with the east (7)
- 23 An absent rear could mean land in Australia (7)
- 24 Wins sled---what a cheat! (7)
- 5 'Tec role, perhaps, turns out to be the one who votes (7)
- 6 In a defiant manner--or a revolting one? (12)

DOWN

- A call follows male? In a sense (7)
- ? Ice and murk together could possibly appear dirtier (7)
- 3 Went to Twy in a rush and got a number (6-3)
- 4 He was evidently fonder of a game of bowls than of the water (5)
- 5 Sir Adam, perhaps, hails from the south of India (7)
- 6 Blowing on a horn? (7)
- 7 Be self bands, in a not-this is what the tide does (4, 3, 5)
- 10 They take their constitutionals when in the dark (12)
- 15 Do the Spanish dance it, or wear it? (3, 6)
- 17 One lute is perhaps to be made use of (7)
- 18 Perhaps inside east, to be indefinitely adjourned (4, 3)
- 19 Pet rats go mad-and produce, instead, light, rapid sounds (7)
- 20 Cleverly-or painfully? (7)
- 22 To expand a transatlantic expression of appreciation (5)

Solutions to Sungay Crossword No. 8

ACROSS

1 Pleasantries 9. Therefore 10 Dante 11 Ensure 12 Curding 13 Nested 15 Slackers 18 Breeding 19 Junías 21 Abdicate 23 Glower 26 Darns 27 Extensive 28 Pedal pushers

DOWN

1 Pattern 2 Evens 3 Spearhead 4 Noon 5 Ruefully 6. Ended 7 Incident 8 Merges 14 Spenders 16 Couplings 17 Anathema 18 Brandy 20 Screens 2 Caste 24 Write 25 Stop

Compiled by Rita Tewari

THE TO STEEL STORE TO THE TELL SECTION OF THE SECT



Satpathy waiting in the wings

WHAT is standing in the way of Mrs Nandini Satpathy's entry into the Congress(1)? The dissident camp in Orissa has been keen that the former chief minister be admitted to the party. But the present chief minister, Mr Janaki Ballabh Patnaik, has managed to checkmate the move The main objection which Mr Patnark's camp has raised is that two cases regarding Mrs Satpathy are pending in the Supreme Court. In this, the Patnaik camp has successfully managed to build a smokescreen around Mrs Sat pathy. The cases in question are in fact petitions challenging the decision of the Orissa government withdrawing two prosecutions against Mrs Satpathy. In the Janata regime, though Mrs Satpathy was a member of that party, cases were



J.B. Patnaik: thwarting moves

started against her relating to her days as the chief minister of Orissa. After the Congress(I) government was formed, under instructions from the Prime Minister, Mr J.B. Patnaik's government withdrew the cases, which were pending in the courts in Bhubarfeswar. Some opposition leaders, however, challenged the withdrawals in the Supreme Court This has come handy for Mr J.B. Patnaik who, whenever asked by the high command if Mrs Satpathy should be admitted, cleverly tells the political managers about the "pending cases." And the inexperience of the Rajiv Gandhi team is such that none of them can refer to contemporary political history. With the doors of the Congress(I) shut, for the time being, Mrs Satpathy has to go it alone

医毛线的 医小心病 愈翘磷酸苯基

THE minister of state for defence. Mr K. P. Singhdeo, is keen to start a defence production unit in his home state, Orissa. Under his instructions, a proposal to set up an explosives factory in Sambalpur district is being studied by the Ordnance Factory Board. The site under consideration is in a cycloneprone area, and way back in the Sixties the defence ministry had turned down a similar proposal in that area because of the hazards inherent in starting an explosives factory in a cyclone-prone area. But Mr Singhdeo's insistence on having a new unit in that area has made senior officers in the defence ministry forget the old files. After all, if a new factory can be set up in Medak because it happens to be the Prime Minister's constituency, certainly Mr Singhdeo can hope for a similar

bonanza for his stare. While the minister has been busy nursing his state, a group of officers in the ministry have successfully managed to get him to okay the extension of an officer who retired around the time when the Prime Minister's directive against extensions to superannuated officers came. As extension was not possible, this officer was re-employed as a consultant with the rank of an additional secretary, safeguarding all the benefits which he had enjoved while in active service. This officer has been put in charge of the project in Medak, for the production of armoured cars and the tank factory in Avadi. He is so powerful that recently when a team was sent to Moscow to negotiate a deal, this retired officer was made the leader of the delegation.

PASSAR'S MOVES

WHAT happened to the much trun peted pan-Congress unity move be tween the Congress(S), the Ras. triya Congress and the Democratic Socialist party? The latest round of talks took place in the residence of Mr Dev Kanta Barooah, in the capit al, on 6 June. The presidents of the three parties, Mr Sharad Pawar, A ·H. N. Bahuguna and Mr Ratubhar. Adanı were present . Mr Sharad Pawar made it clear to his friends that he had no intention of giving up either the name or the flag of his party. To this, the other two agreed. , Only later, when the meeting was over, a feeler was sent to Mr Pawar that all his terms were acceptable if Mr Bahuguna were to be accepted as the party president. There was no response from the Congress(S) to this. Meanwhile, Mr Sharad Pawar is keeping in close touch with the Janata Party president, Mr Chandra Shekhar and has been joining in his padayatra, from time to time. He was with Mr Chandra Shekhar in Indore and again at Agra. Apparently, while keeping a section of his partymen happy by continuing the talks with Mr Bahuguna and Mr Adani, Mr Sharad Pawai has shown everybody where his own heart lies

THE brother of Delhi's Lt. Governor, Mr Jagmohan, Prot. P. L. Malhotra, has been appointed the new director of the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the organisation which is entrusted with the task of bringing out textbooks for schools. There is nothing wrong in a Lt Governor's brother being appointed to a high academic post. But the fortunes of Prof. Malhotra seem to have been linked with that of his brother. Soon after Mr Jagmohan became the Lt. Governor of Delhi in 1980, Prof. Malhotra was selected for the post of Chancellor of the Himachal Pradesh University, Simla. He, however, refused to take up the post. When Mr Jagmohan was shunted to Goa after Mr Rajiv Gandhi's ascendancy in politics, there was no news about Prof Malhotra. Now that Mr Jagmohan is back in Delhi and in the good books of the powers that be, Prof. Malhotra has once again been honoured. Incidentally, the entire original selection panel for the post of NCERT director was changed prior) to the selection of Prof. Malhotra

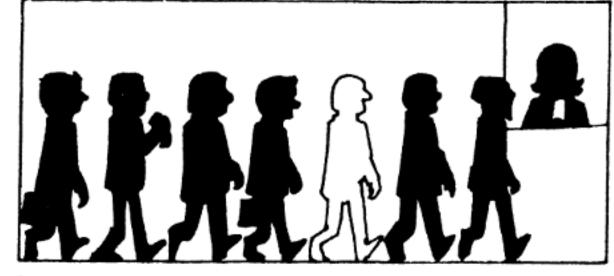
D.E. NIZAMUDDIN

The queue melts... as soon as it forms.

11:02



!!:[]!-!



11:08



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